



BELLEGARDE.

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BELLE GARDE,

THE

ADOPTED INDIAN BOY.

A CANADIAN TALE.

A quoi bon vous mettre en courroux
Si vous reconnaissez vos traits dans quelque fable ?
Il n'est en pareil cas qu'un parti raisonnable ;
Ne dites mot ;—corrigez vous.

LE BAILLY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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BELLEGARDE.

CHAPTER I.

Row, brothers row, the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near, and daylight's pass'd.

MOORE. *Canadian boat-song.*

DE COURCY took an affectionate leave of the family, and placed himself and his fortunes in a bark-canoe, under the guidance of Bellegarde, an old warrior of his tribe, and two men accustomed to the use of paddles, which are on the Canadian waters employed in lieu of oars, as being more suitable to the light unsteady vessels of the Indians, which the motion of

oars would upset, however skilfully managed. The old chief gave the signal, by flourishing his paddle over his head, and the light skiff darted gracefully through the crystal wave, with a rapidity much like that of the dolphin, when he seeks to keep pace with the small flying-fish on which he preys. We have remarked, that these canoes are easily upset, and Eustace soon perceived by its movement, that he could not, without danger, either turn or move his head on his shoulders. The castle soon faded in the distant horizon, and he looked with a lover's interest towards the last cottages that ornamented the borders of the lake. Many a wish did he breathe, that Providence had given him one of these humble dwellings, with Matilda for his companion, and hearts exempt from ambition, to render such an existence delightful. He would again correct

such selfish desires, as unworthy of them both, and relapse into a train of reflection calculated to reconcile him to his condition. Some hours elapsed in this mode of thinking. He neither listened to the song of the boatmen, nor paid attention to their progress, until he was roused by the rapidity of the current and the dashing of the waters in all directions around him, as if a hundred streams precipitated themselves into a common basin. The waves seemed to be animated with a spirit of destruction; and as the Indian who, placed on his knees in front, turned the prow of the vessel towards every wave that rolled towards its side and menaced to break over it, the motion seemed to be arrested by a force equally pressing on all sides. Eustace thought he made no headway, but lifted from swell to swell in succession, the apparent course was that of a circle,

from whose centre there seemed no possibility of escaping. Bellegarde sate at the rear ; and as the tumult of the waters and apparent danger were deemed, even by the most fearless of the Indians, sufficient to put the firmest nerves to a severe trial, the malicious boy looked steadily on the countenance of Eustace, in expectation of catching an expression of trouble ; but it was unmoved as bronze. In the midst of this danger, the boat was carried forward by the force of the under current, and at the end of a painful half hour, the peril was passed, and they descended the peaceful flood like men who had awakened from a troubled dream.

“ This has been a rough voyage,” said Eustace.

“ I am only surprised, captain, that you seemed so indifferent to the danger. With

persons unacquainted with the navigation of that passage, or a boat so heavy, as not instantly to obey the impulse of the paddle, it would be certain destruction to attempt it; many of your countrymen, more hazardous than prudent, are now tossed among the rocks and whirlpools of that dangerous place; but our people are acquainted with it, and seldom meet with any fatal accident in the descent. But there is one more rapid fall of the river, which we must not even approach. There is a little harbour not far from it, where we land, and carry our boat from thence to the foot of the water-fall. I hope we shall reach it before night overtakes us."

While the boat continued in smooth water, Eustace ordered the men to take refreshment from a hamper of meat, wine and spirits, that had been put on board. Bellegarde, unwill-

ling to interfere in the distribution of the liberalities of De Courcy, shewed, nevertheless, signs of uneasiness at the free use the boatmen made of the rum-bottle. They took large doses, were for a time noisy, and as evening closed, grew dull and sluggish. The Indian who was placed in front to watch for the entrance of the small harbour, was fast asleep; and Bellegarde, trusting to his vigilance, remained in a state of security, until he perceived the canoe running with the celerity of a race-horse. He had often made this voyage, but did not remember, after passing the whirlpools, any rapid current in the river. Being soon convinced by the distant sound of the cascade that all was not right, he called out to the guide to inquire if he was near the harbour. The wretched man, waking suddenly, perceived that he had passed the entrance of

it, and a cloud that passed from the face of the moon, enabled him to see the motion of her rays on the tremendous cataract, whose approach, beset with rocks, tossed the stream into volumes of foam. He uttered a piercing scream, and in the impulsion given to the light bark canoe by the suddenness of his movement, he fell overboard and disappeared. The two assistants, who now saw themselves carried forward to inevitable destruction, made desperate but vain attempts to resist the impetuosity of the current. They could only slacken, not stop the pace of the canoe; and in the agony of conviction that in another minute they would cease to live, they let the paddles fall from hands already palsied with terror.

"We are lost!" said the brave Indian boy; "let me hold your hand, Captain De Courcy, that we may not be separated." Eustace

made no reply, but extending his arm, grasped firmly that of Bellegarde. The boat struck; "follow!" said the boy instantly; "where there is bottom we may stand."

The movement of both accompanied the words. A pointed rock had taken the centre of the canoe; the force of the current turned her round upon it like a pivot. The two friends, for such a common danger had rendered them, fastened upon the rough sides of the rock, which lay only a few inches under the surface of the water, and finding themselves secure, attempted to hold the boat, or pull the two men towards them; but these had lost all power to act; they screamed, hesitated, were swept over the precipice, and the crash of the boat, mingled with their cries and the noise of the cascade, fell upon the ears of Eustace and his companion!

The rock on which they had taken refuge was of a conical form. They fixed themselves on its sides ; and having recovered from the rapid emotions that shook resolution, hope, fear and gratitude, to their foundation, they seated themselves to seek a moment's repose. The water, as we have observed, was not deep, the weather was very warm, and had any means of reaching the banks of the river offered themselves to their imagination, their condition would have been supportable. De Courcy was the first to break silence.

“ How do you feel yourself after this miraculous escape, Bellegarde ? ”

“ Wretched, unhappy, to have lost the old chief of the tribe, and to have proposed to you, Captain De Courcy, to descend by water instead of letting you return by land. This is a most calamitous affair. Our people will

blame me for permitting these men to drink strong spirits, when there was danger to be avoided. I shall lose my reputation; and how shall I face my mistress and the baron, even supposing it possible, which to me is now indifferent on my own account, that we should devise any mode of extricating ourselves."

"I sympathize with you, my brave boy," said Eustace, "in all you must suffer for the loss of your old chief, and the young men who have fallen victims to the abuse he made of the brandy-bottle; but men die every where; and when death is the result of vice or folly, we may pity those who fall, without taking blame to ourselves; besides, am I not in the present case more culpable than you? I gave these men the liquor, without reflecting that your red brethren only measure their capacity to bear its effects, by the quantity they can

obtain. But let us leave moralizing and think of our safety. Are there inhabitants on the shores who might come to our aid?"

"Yes; but how can they get us off? I might perhaps swim to shore in spite of the force of the current; but though it were possible to save myself, I gave you my hand, I said we should die together, and I will not leave you."

"Nay, my brave friend," replied Eustace, "that shall not be; if you can from your dexterity in swimming save your own life, and that I am unable to extricate myself, I submit to the will of heaven, who has permitted this evil to befall me, perhaps for wise purposes, inscrutable to me."

"Never!" said Bellegarde with terrific energy. By heaven, Bellegarde would disgrace his ancestors, and carry the name of coward to

a dishonoured grave, were he to abandon his charge! I have read, that commanders of British ships have sunk in the vessel they could not save, after having seen the crew safe in the boats. Alas! why has it not been permitted me to land my crew in safety, and join the spirit of my brave father, who, in that case, could have no reproach to address to a degenerate son."

The boy groaned with agony, and Eustace, to comfort him, declared that he would rather they should perish together, than do violence to sentiments equally honourable and exalted. "Let us wait," said he, "until day-light; we shall then judge more accurately the nature of our position, and the resolution we ought to adopt."

In imitation of several eminent examples, we might leave our young friends in this peril-

ous situation, and, in order to render our history more dramatic, lead our readers to other scenes of minor interest; but we are narrating real facts, not inventing artificial scenes of distress; nor do we wholly approve of any species of literary tactic in the arrangement of our matter, which might tire the patience of the reader, rather than impart a real and deep interest to the story.

The weather was warm; the water was not so cold as to endanger the lives of two young men full of life and vigour. They bore their misfortune with patience, until the pale light of the moon was lost in the rosy tints with which the morning sun streaked the horizon. They looked with eagerness towards the shores; the country was thinly inhabited; nothing was seen but the interminable shade of the forest; before them the cataract foamed; on each side

the current ran so fast, that it would be impossible even for a Newfoundland spaniel to reach land before he must have been tossed on the first pitch of the water-fall. What was to be done? Providence seemed to have abandoned them! The morning advanced without offering a gleam of hope. Bellegarde was silent,—mournful,—by turns irritated; constantly recurring to the fault he had committed, innocently no doubt, but still he blamed himself. At length he turned towards his companion, and said in a determined tone, “ Captain De Courcy, my resolution is taken: I will attempt to gain the bank; my success depends on one untried experiment. The river is too deep to allow me to wade a little farther up, where I might take a direction that would enable me to reach the shore, in which case my hour is come, and I follow my companions; or,

if I can ascend the stream only twenty steps, I shall succeed. I have measured the distance with my eye; I know my own capacity: and now, I beseech you, allow me to bid you adieu."

"If we do meet again why we shall smile;
If not, why then this parting was well made."

De Courcy had seen enough of this extraordinary being to be convinced that (as the Indians say when they resolve to perform any very perilous deed), *he had thrown away his body*; and as his project was as reasonable a one as could be conceived, where no choice of expedients presented itself, held out his hand in token of consent. Bellegarde took it with an affectionate grasp, pressed it to his lips, looked tenderly in his face, and in that look all was pity for De Courcy; then slid gently down the side of the rock. He found footing;

and as the water formed an eddy for a considerable distance above the spot he had left, he met no opposition from the current, and continued to walk with great caution chin deep in the water. But having approached a second rock, round which the two side currents rippled, he found the resistance too great for his strength. Eustace followed him with anxious looks; and seeing him plunge under the surface, a moment of despair seized on his frame, and nearly deprived him of power to remain on his feet. But the plunge of Bellegarde was like those efforts by which a salmon darts through a water-fall, and reaches a smooth surface. In spite of the current he had fastened himself on the second rock, rose up on its surface, and waving his arm round his head, shouted "victory!"

"Not yet, not yet, my gallant fellow," said Eustace; "be cautious."

Bellegarde stood for a moment longer to collect his mind and examine the various chances that presented themselves. He found the water less deep in the second eddy, and marched on, avoiding carefully the currents that ran with velocity on either side. When he had proceeded about twenty paces, there were no more rocks, the water deepened, and the river, rolling rapidly towards the falls, resisted any farther efforts to advance. He saw in the waving line of the shore the nearest point, and gathering all the power of his elastic limbs, darted towards it, swimming with a celerity which astonished Eustace. The Indian reached the bank before Eustace could recover from the surprise and admiration these united efforts of courage and skill had excited in his breast.

Bellegarde disappeared, and at the expiration of an hour returned, accompanied by all

the inhabitants, men, women and children, of a neighbouring village. While numbers were busily occupied preparing a canoe and tying cords together, the old people and children were on their knees, imploring heaven for the delivery of De Courcy,—an event which they still considered exceedingly problematical.

When a sufficient length of rope was prepared, and well fastened to the canoe, and the other end attached to a small tree that grew on the bank, Bellegarde endeavoured to persuade some one of the collected group to accompany him, in order to assist him in directing the canoe towards the spot where De Courcy stood; but neither entreaties nor offers of large recompense could prevail on any one to venture on so perilous an expedition. They urged that the rope might break, the boat be knocked against a rock by the force of the

stream: some of them suggested that by pushing the boat empty into the current at different positions it would at last reach the destined place; and when Bellegarde resolved to return alone, much opposition was made by the bystanders, especially by some Indians, who knew him, and thought they might recommend themselves to his favour and that of his tribe, by forcing him to abandon so rash an undertaking.

At first he bore their remonstrances with patience; but when he saw them about to launch the boat without him, he drew his dirk and threatened to stab the first person who should attempt to oppose the execution of his will. A shout of applause was raised by the women, whose enthusiasm was more easily excited than that of the men; so that he was left to follow his inclination.

He then placed a long pole in the canoe, and having given to the strongest of the men the rope to hold, with orders to act as he might direct by voice and signal, he pushed from the shore towards the middle of the river. He directed his course with his accustomed skill, and with the aid of the pole, pushed into the current that ran by the side of the rock on which De Courcy waited. At a signal given, the men pulled the rope, and Bellegarde, having planted the pole close to the rock, jammed the canoe between them, so that Eustace got into it without any inconvenience. The men now pulled so quickly as to draw the canoe to the bank in spite of the current, which, nevertheless, was near overcoming their efforts, and drawing it towards the edge of the water-fall.

The spectators of this scene were as deeply affected as the actors themselves: the woods

rang with their supplications to Providence; and when the boat touched the shore, an hundred arms were extended to receive the two intrepid passengers. The kind hearted Canadians, almost suffocated Bellegarde with caresses; and marks of admiration and tenderness were the touching and agreeable recompense of his conduct.

"You are safe, Captain De Courcy," said he, "and my misfortune is less great than I had apprehended when the sun rose on our heads this morning."

"I owe my life to thy courage and address, noble Bellegarde," said Eustace, taking his hand; "henceforward let us be friends and brothers. I hold thy attachment in honour, and shall, to the end of my existence, rejoice in every opportunity of proving how much I value and esteem thee."

A tear moistened the eye of the young In-

dian; and his countenance, until then rigid and energetic, relaxed into its natural grace and amenity.

Repose and refreshment were offered to them by the inhabitants. They made a cheerful repast; but Bellegarde, fearful that the family of the baron might be uneasy at a longer absence than usual, immediately set forth for the castle of D'Argenteuil; and Eustace readily found among the obliging and hospitable people a guide and horses to convey him to Montreal.

CHAPTER II.

One while he spred his arms him fro,
 One while he spred them nye;
 And aye ! but I winne that lady's love
 For dole now I mun dye.

OLD BALLAD.

THE first care of De Courcy, after his arrival, was to send money and presents of various kinds to be given to the families of the Indians who had perished. To Bellegarde he sent a ring with a small medallion, on which was engraven a heart, with this device, "FEARLESS AND FAITHFUL."

"Well hast thou merited," said he in a letter, "heroic youth, some token of esteem and

attachment at my hands. I am proud to call thee by the endearing name of friend; and if thou art ambitious, and my voice could reach the ears of the monarch I serve, thy eminent qualities would not long lie buried in the obscurity of a village, which is scarce known beyond the precincts of thy favourite lake. But continue to watch over thy protectors; the esteem and love of such a family, are probably dearer to thy generous heart, than all that kings or governments could bestow."

De Courcy now turned seriously to the performance of his regimental duties. He had, as he thought, made an offering of his love for Matilda on the altar of glory; and this belief increased his attachment to his profession, which promised a more ample field of exertion from the political events which had now led to open war between Great Britain and her North American colonies.

Orders were received to exercise the troops; and his days were spent in marching, manœuvring, platoon-firing and sham battles, with all the detail preparatory to entering upon active service. His pulse beat high at the prospect of distinguishing himself in the field; and he was unwearied in his efforts to render his company as perfect as discipline and order could render them. Unlike the greater part of his brother officers, he had conscientiously studied his military duties, and would have blushed to be moved about as they were, like chessmen on a board, by an adjutant or drill-serjeant, without understanding why or wherefore. He did not stop to examine whether his country required his blood to be shed in a good or a bad cause; he had engaged to obey her voice, pronounced by the constitutional organ; his wish was to die or distinguish himself; and as

appearances justified the hope that such an opportunity as he desired would soon present itself, he laboured with ardour during the day, and dreamed of love and fame at night. I shall soon, he would often repeat to himself, have opportunities of seeking distinction; and my name may reach the beloved girl, accompanied by new claims to her esteem. She does not know, and cannot love this favoured cousin; she may find him even disagreeable, and her father will scarce do such violence to her inclinations, as to force her to marry a man merely because he is her relation.

Such, and like reflections, constantly occupied his mind, although his reason sought to banish them as incompatible with his fortune and pursuits; but as the proverb expresses it, "where love enters, reason loses her empire."

An opportunity of satisfying a very natural

curiosity presented itself in a short time after his return from the Lake of the Two Mountains. In the midst of his morning avocations, the noisy town-major came bustling into his room to invite him to a pic-nic breakfast.

"It's an old friend, my dear fellow, just arrived from England, you know; a famous fellow; gave many a good blow-out before he melted his estate in his kitchen, you know; loves a good dinner and all that kind o' thing, you know. You'll like him amazingly; sings a good song, you know."

"And does not laugh at his friends when they are not present to defend themselves, I hope?" said Eustace smiling.

"Ah! there you are at the old affair; 'pon my soul, De Courcy, you are the most provoking man I ever met, you know. D—n me, if you were not the best fellow in the world,

you know, I could never forgive you for taking that duel into your own hands. D—m me if I would not have cut him into minced meat. So, as I was saying,—’pon my honour if I have not forgotten all I wanted to say, you know ;—have so many things to think of in my official capacity,—ah, yes,—it was about my friend, who is just arrived from England ; great chums we were—intimate as twin-cherries on a branch. But poor Bertinval was not up to a thing or two, so he got out at the elbows—’pon my soul ; does not care a fig for that ; is going to marry a rich cousin ; a devilish good concern—up there at the Lake, where you have been, you know.”

The Baron de Bertinval !” said Eustace :
“ going to marry, who did you say ?”

“ Why, my dear fellow, do you know him ?
he is just going to marry the pretty daughter

you for taking
D—m me if
ninned meat.
our if I have
ou know ;—
n my official
my friend,
and ; great
cherries on
as not up to
ne elbows—
for that ; is
vilish good
where you

Eustace :
"
now him ?
daughter

of old D'Argenteuil, with a thumping fortune ;
that is, as soon as old square-toes has slipped
his wind. I'm in all his secrets—lived toge-
ther in London like cocks in a pasty."

" You are, then, acquainted with the father
of your friend's destined bride, Thornwood ?"

" Why, yes, a little,—saw him in the world,
you know ; proud as Lucifer, rich as a Jew,
they say ; one of the old stock—bad feeder ;
gives no blow-out, you know ; eats all his
venison alone, because he is afraid some one
will carry off Mamzelle Marie, I think they
call her. But Bert. will set all that to rights,
you know ; turn the old boy's woods into Lon-
don particular and Chateau Margeau, and
make the castle ring."

" The young lady whom you call Marie,
master Thornwood, is the most lovely and in-
teresting girl I have ever seen ; and her father

a perfect gentleman, whom I would recommend to all my friends to take for a model of politeness and hospitality."

"That's a good 'un, by Jupiter! I'll tell Bert. he is going to find a rival at breakfast. He'll divide the spoil with you; only let him have the grub, he won't dispute about the lady."

"Now, my very good and very witty town-major, I have one favour to ask of you: I have been treated with great kindness by the Baron D'Argenteuil and his respectable family."

"There now, a frowning Apollo! I am only joking, you know—good gracious! who ought to know, if I don't, how ticklish you are on the article of friendship."

"Well, then, Thornwood, I pray you not to mention my name, when you speak of the

family of D'Argenteuil, nor ever speak of them with unseemly levity in my presence. They are too noble to be made topics of jesting at a mess-table; and a man who knows every person and the affairs of every person in the country, can start fitter game to be run down by the hounds of our pack."

"Any thing in the world to please you, my dear fellow," as the duke used to say to me.—
"So you will come to breakfast at my lodging to-morrow, and make the acquaintance of Bertinval? Apropos of breakfast; dined with the Bishop of Quebec yesterday—a most unhappy man—complained dreadfully of the small beer—can't get any good in the colony—wish I could find some for him. A crack feeder—sat three hours at table. I'll introduce you to him, eh?"

"Thanks to you, Thornwood. I am a bad

feeder; but I will be punctual at the hour of breakfast."

"Well, adieu! I'll tell Bertinval you have seen his uncle and cousin."

"Then you will take the first opportunity to disoblige me and break your promise."

"Good! good! I forgot,—adieu!"

"I shall then have the satisfaction of seeing this cousin," said Eustace, when he had got rid of his troublesome visitor. "God grant that he may not resemble the picture his friend Thornwood gives of him, in the eulogium he makes of his qualities; for since I cannot hope to be myself the husband of Matilda, my first wish ought to be, that the man who is destined to so happy a lot, should be worthy of such a treasure."

De Courcy found several of his brother officers at the lodging of the town-major the fol-

lowing morning, and a gentleman, whom Thornwood presented as his old and intimate friend, the Baron of Bertinval. He was tall, thin and emaciated; he had once been good-looking, but premature old age seemed to have banished the rosy warmth of youth from a countenance upon which thirty years only ought not to have left such indelible traces of waste and debility. There was an air of fashion and nonchalance about him. He scarce noticed Eustace, after the first cursory bow. His long lean fingers grasped a cup of strong tea, which a tremulous motion of his nerves scarce permitted to reach his lips. His hair, on the front part of his head, had fallen off, and the remainder was mixed with grey; his eyes were without expression, and, to use the language of a dandy, who excused himself from going on foreign service, he

"wanted a trip to the mountains for the benefit of asses'-milk."

Thornwood, who was ever intent upon drawing the notice of the company towards himself and his titled friends, immediately commenced a conversation with the stranger.

"Pray, baron, how did you leave my friend the Duke, and Herbert? when does he hope to get out of the Bench, and open the castle-gates to his old companions?"

"I did not know any duke with whom you and I were acquainted in England; and as to Herbert, whom you once saw at my house in Hanover-square, he was never in the Bench since I have known him."

"Ay, ay, you are right, baron; I was thinking of Lord William, you know; but I don't believe I made you acquainted with *him*."

"I have not been so honoured," said Ber-

tinval, with a supercilious smile, as if he would not allow the strangers present to believe "*they two had eaten so often out of the same dish.*"

"But can any one present give me news of my uncle, and the Lake of the Two Mountains; for I have been so unwell since my arrival, that I have really not had time to inquire?"

"The family of the Baron D'Argenteuil is in good health, sir," said Eustace: "I had the pleasure recently of passing some days at the castle."

"And pray, sir, how did you find its old-fashioned inhabitants? I dare swear my aunt Belrose bored you with old stories of Chantilly, and the St. Hubert hunt. She never liked me since I praised the break-neck pleasures of an English fox chase."

"I found the whole family, sir, a very admirable specimen of that dignity and virtue which, I am sorry to say, is going out of fashion, without leaving any thing very fascinating in its place. I prefer the stiffness of manner, and inflexibility of principle, which our fathers carried to extremes, to the companion familiarity and artificial benevolence of more modern society. With the former, politeness meant something, and every one knew its value; now it is base metal, —*copper-washed*."

"My uncle is a very worthy man indeed, Captain De Courcy; but, with so large a fortune, I cannot conceive of any thing more singular than the dull life he leads."

"Wants a little brushing up," said Thornwood; "we will drive him out of that jog-trot, you know, when we take possession of

the castle. D—m me, how his pet Algonquins will stare when they see us sweating-down the old stock of wine, and turning day into night !”

“ My dear Thornwood,” said Bertinval, “ my plan is changed; I must reform, and marry. But pray, Captain De Courcy, is my pretty cousin out of leading-strings?—Let me see, she must be eighteen, and I dare say very clever: in which case I must yield to my uncle’s will, and turn benedict.”

“ Your cousin, sir, is very clever; and I cannot but felicitate you on the happiness that awaits you in the alliance to which you allude.”

“ Yes, a bread-and-butter kind of existence for a man who has tasted the sweets of society, and lived on high-seasoned food; but ‘*vogue la galère*,’ as we say when we push into the stream.”

"Don't look dull upon it, Bert.," said the officious town-major; "leave me to manage matters for you; the castle shall not want good company while it furnishes good cheer:—so take a little of this venison steak; it will make you as fresh as a rose. In a few days you will forget the fatigues of your voyage, you know."

"What, Thornwood, you want to blow me up, as you call it; to make my gills as rosy as these highland cocks, who have crammed you like a *chapon du mans*. No, no, I cannot stand high living."

We have entered into the narrative rather minutely of this conversation, in order that our readers may judge from the remarks of the *dramatis personæ*, what kind of game they were playing; and we do this on the authority of our friend, Sancho Panza, who

held that to "judge people accurately, we must always let them speak for themselves."

It always happens, that a man who sincerely loves, is ill at ease when circumstances compel him to speak of, or listen to, any observations relating to the object of his affections. In society she either engrosses all his attention—but this only when there is no mystery to be maintained,—or she is the person of all the group who seems the most unobserved by him. There is, in his mind, something too holy, too sacred, in that being whom he adores, to render it a fitting subject of familiar discussion. Eustace, therefore, found this breakfast irksome; and, with some reasonable excuse, took leave of the major and his guests. He saw in Bertinval a rival, whose pretensions were sanctioned by the father of his beloved Matilda; but

worse than the belief that he was a happy rival, was the conviction, that this worn-out rake, who was destined to be her husband, could never render her happy. He saw the low flower blooming in all the freshness of youth, innocence, and virtue, blighted and withered by the inauspicious touch of a creature already rotten before maturity; and whose contact produced, necessarily, a moral and physical deterioration in the person to whom he would be united for life. Overcome by such reflections as these, he cast himself into a chair, and large tears came to his relief.

Be not scandalized, gentle reader, at this apparent sign of weakness in a brave and ardent soldier. It is not the first time that grief, joy, or rage, has moistened the eye of more celebrated heroes than Eustace. The

prince of poets, who well knew the secret springs of the human heart that vibrate under the touch of passion, brings tears to the aid of Achilles, when he was nearly suffocated with grief for the loss of his bride; and we, who maintain that love wields his sceptre with as much power on the cold banks of the Saint Lawrence as under the softer skies of Greece, are of opinion, that such tokens of great sensibility are no proofs of feebleness or infirmity.

I might resign myself, said the afflicted youth, to see her married to a man who could appreciate her worth, approve of her taste, habitudes, and opinions; a man who had something of nature left in him;—but to cast her, like a “loathsome weed,” into an atmosphere of corruption, insensibility, and vice;—no, by heaven, it shall not be!—If D’Ar-

genteuil bestow his daughter on such a man, were he an hundred times his nephew, he is unworthy of my esteem. But he is deceived; he cannot know Bertinval. I will cast to the winds prudence, reserve, propriety,—all those conventional virtues which, as general rules, are respectable, and useful: my duty, my gratitude, my love,—if I must utter that terrible word,—are all armed against such an event; and I will die ere it shall be accomplished. He paced the room in an agitated state of mind, such as he had never before known; he rang for his servant. The poor fellow, alarmed at his appearance, partook of his emotion; and, in such cases, the first conclusion to which an Irish servant arrives, is, that some offence had been given to his master, and was about to be punished.

"Go," said he, in a voice of thunder, "and tell Major Thornwood to come here."

Bill Holebrook flew on his master's errand, and, big with the first impression that had taken possession of his simple, unreflecting credulity, thought it as necessary to ask for pistols as a second for his master. He found the major going abroad to talk of his newly arrived friend, and his breakfast party. Seeing the servant, out of breath, running towards his door, he stopped short to ask where he was going.

"Only coming to borrow your honour's pistols, and ask you to come to my master immediately."

"Pistols! pistols, my good lad," said the major, staring: "what—what can your master want with pistols?"

"To pepper somebody, your honour, what else? and, as he has no barking-irons in the house, if you'll just give me lave, I'll bring him your's."

The major rubbed his forehead, and hesitated a moment. "Are you sure, Bill, he asked for me, as well as the pistols?"

"Sure, your honour! why it was the first and last word he said to me."

"Good," said the major; "since he asks for me and my pistols, he is not angry with me. Take them, Bill; they are in a small case on the table; and give my compliments to your master. I shall soon be with him."

Bill took the pistols, and admired their beauty as he went along. Pretty darlings, said he, your master keeps you for shew, just to frighten people; for he looked as

feared when I axed for ye, as my mother's cow when she sees a strange dog in the paddock. But wid my master ye'll sing another tune, my little larks; ye'll soon be after boring a bit of a hole through somebody's jacket, or my name's not Bill Howlbrook. Well, God be wid the time, when I used to sit up half the night melting bullets for the ould earl. The expectation of a battle exhilarated the poor fellow's spirits so much, that he capered from joy as he returned to his master, and gave a practical illustration of the truth of an old saying, now become proverbially true, that "*the Irish are the only people who fight to amuse themselves.*"

"Here, your honour," said he, laying down the pistol case, "here are the spitfires for you, all clain and nate, just ready to give an honest man a cowl'd breakfast."

"What order did I give you, sirrah?" said Eustace in a voice of thunder.

"Order!—order, your honour?—by the hand of my body if I don't forget!—A! yes, now I see it;—to tell the major to come to your honour; and so as I thought your honour was uncommonly flustered, I thought I might just as well make sure of the persuaders in case of need. Besides, your honour, Jem Keenaghan, the major's man, told me, it was no matter, as his master never wanted them, and only kept them by way of a scare-crow, your honour."

The concluding part of the speech gave a new direction to the anger that was gathering on the brow of Eustace, and he laughed immoderately; in this Bill joined him so heartily that he quite disarmed him.

"The next time I tell you to do any thing,

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Bill, pray confine yourself strictly to the order,
—do neither more nor less than I command."

"Then I need not melt any bullets?" said
Bill with a tone and expression of disappoint-
ment.

As soon as Bill had carried off the pistol
case, and was out of sight of the town-major's
lodgings, that discreet personage returned to
his room to reflect upon the singularity of an
event which might have certain inconvenient
consequences for him. He ordered his ser-
vant to say he was out, in order that he might
reflect, without interruption, upon the matter
in hand. He laid down his cane, rubbed his
face with his pocket handkerchief, and com-
menced his soliloquy.

Our readers will readily suppose that the
major possessed that considerate kind of cou-
rage, which shrinks from all unnecessary and

avoidable danger. He talked much about duelling, had the finest patent breech pistols, and constantly lamented the misfortunes that had befallen him in several rencontres, of which none but those to whom he related them in a tone of seeming distress, had ever heard. Upon the present occasion he was uncomfortable, without knowing well why or wherefore. This hot-brained fellow, said he, has a kind of claim on me; but I have made it a rule only to defend my own honour, but never to meddle in other men's disputes. It is true, I am not the principal; but even the second does not always come off with whole bones. I have only to differ in opinion with some of these Irish lieutenants, about the distance or the position of the principals, or the account that is given of the affair, and slap a duel is fixed upon me, in spite of all my precautions.—D—n me, (look-

ing at his well-lined paunch), if I have not outgrown all such *corvées*. So placing himself before a looking glass, and seeing the solid thickness of his corporation, as he called it, he continued,—No, no, Thornwood, it won't do. Thou art as easily hit as a barn door.—My pistols are at his service:—but I am town-major;—my business is to arrest those who are about to infringe the articles of war, or to trouble the king's peace. So here goes.—D—n me if I get into a scrape for any one; and I will arrest this Hotspur fellow, if there be any thing serious.—Armed with this saving resolution, he went forth to answer the call of Eustace.

“A thousand pardons, my dear fellow,” said he on entering the apartment. “Would have come sooner, but was obliged just to pass into the house of the colonel for an affair of

duty, you know. Hope you have nothing serious on hand, or if you have, you must keep it a secret from the town-major, you know; can't afford to lose my place, you know, my dear fellow."

"My blundering servant has led you into a mistake, major. The affair, though one of honour, is not of the nature you suppose, but otherwise very important to my peace. I sent for you to obtain information that no person so well as yourself can give."

"My dear fellow, you know I am body and soul at your service," said the major, recovering suddenly from the alarm into which his faint and tremulous heart had thrown him;—"only say in what way I can serve you. I am yours as true as the needle to the pole."

And as wavering too, thought Eustace.—
"Well, major, begin by giving me your word

of honour that a word of our conversation shall never escape your lips, and that you will answer without the least concealment or reserve, the questions I shall put to you."

The major, placing himself in a theatrical attitude, and raising his hand very much in the manner of certain princes who promise constitutions in the hour of danger, and infringe them when they expect impunity, said "I SWEAR!"

"How long have you known the Baron of Bertinval?"

"The Baron of Bertinval!"

"Yes, Thornwood. Pray give me on this point all the information you possess or can obtain. Revert to things and times passed, that you may wish to conceal from your common acquaintance. No scruples, I conjure you. I am not ignorant of the outline of your

history. I think favourably of your heart; and as I presume you set a higher value on my friendship than that of Bertinval, I beseech you to make known to me his character, disposition and habitudes."

"Why really, Captain De Courcy, I have no secret I would conceal from you. Every thing I know of him I will tell you freely, you know, 'pon my honour I will.—Let me reflect, you know.—I got acquainted with Bertinval in London, seven years ago. A gay fellow,—what you may call a gay fellow,—fond of pleasure, you know; spent his fortune like most young men without experience."

"You already intimated to me that he was out at the elbows, major. How did he spend his fortune?—I know you were connected with a gaming-house. Is it there you made his acquaintance?"

"Why, to tell you the truth, I rather think it was; but that is all *entre nous*, you know. He was fond of shaking the box a little, and such gentleman-like accomplishments; but all fair and above board, you know. Owes me a few, you know, of old scores,—mere trifles, 'pon my honour."

"What do you call trifles, major?"

"Only a thousand, or so;—a mere bagatelle for the heir of Argenteuil. His creditors must wait till he marry his cousin, you know, and then all will be right. But he must keep snug till his health gets better; and I'll try to keep some noisy creditors from alarming old square toes or the daughter."

"Really, major, that is kind in you; and if old square toes and his daughter only knew the obligations they owe you, to allow a ruined gambler to become the heir of their house and

the husband of the young lady, there is no knowing how far their gratitude might carry them."

"Not my affair, you know, my dear fellow. Besides, if I were to blab, you know, I should never be paid. Then he will keep a warm house,—give famous blows-out; that's all I care about."

"But should he fail in obtaining his cousin, you would lose your thousand pounds, major?"

"O, no danger of that.—Simple girl,—does as her father bids her. He has got the old man's promise, you know. Only waits till she is of suitable age. Then I have his bond for the money, all signed, sealed and delivered, you know."

"Then, major, permit me to tell you a secret, in return for this mark of confidence:—he will not marry the daughter of D'Argen-

teuil; and you must make up your mind to live without "the penalty of your bond." No, the young, the lovely, the interesting Matilda, shall not thus be deceived and sacrificed, while Eustace De Courcy lives to protect her. I am not fond of making what you call big speeches, major; but if I must cut my way through friends or foes (looking sternly at the affrighted Thornwood), to save her, I accept the task and all its consequences with delight."

"God bless me! Captain De Courcy, you are not going to compromise me, I hope. You would get me into difficulties with Bertinval.—I have so many reasons for keeping his secrets."

"Make your heart, easy, major. Say nothing, and trust to my discretion."

"But then I shall lose my money, you know. A d—d hard case;—a debt of honour, upon

which I reckoned to make me easy in my old days, you know."

"Means may be devised to satisfy you, but never by Bertinval."

"Well, well; I depend upon you, my dear fellow; it's all one to me, so I get paid, you know."

So saying, the town-major affected to be in great haste to make his morning calls, and departed, biting his lips with rage, that they had so freely disclosed secrets that might militate against his interest.—D—n my stupid brains, said he to himself. I have let a green-horn pump me; and if Bertinval's affair miscarry, in consequence of my indiscretion, adieu my hopes of cash or comfort! Still, if I had done nothing to satisfy that wild Irishman, I might have had other fish to fry."

When the major was unwise enough to stum-

ble over the threshold of prudence, he immediately attempted to retreat into some paltry circle of compensation. He had betrayed from weakness or timidity the secret of the man he called his friend; but he consoled himself with the reflection that he had got safely out of the hands of Eustace, and with a tranquil mind might eat another good dinner and swallow "a cup of sack." To him, danger that stared him in the face was the worst of evils. Timidity, not benevolence, had made him every man's friend; and although he had not virtue enough to resist an opportunity of committing a mean action that promised him any personal advantage, he had sense enough to appreciate the value of a good reputation. He was one of those "middle compound characters" that form the intermediate link between good and evil: and of such stuff is

formed the authors of all the dupery and deceit that are practised in society. They compose that false coin that is often passed for pure metal. They act like men of honour, until want stimulates into life and activity their passions and weakness. They march from the cradle to the grave without any fixed principles of conduct; and as they adopt for the moment the opinions, and humour the prejudices, of every person they desire to conciliate, they are well received, without being either respected or admired by their acquaintances. They are intimate in every family where a good dinner is to be had in exchange for courtesy and complaisance; they call the servants mister and mistress, and bid them good night and good morning (if the master be not present), with a most edifying urbanity; insist upon taking the least distinguished place at

table, and being helped last. They have always little presents for the children, and some scandal to deal out at tea. Their hours of paying visits are always about meal time; and although they accept without much pressing, are sure to tell of the invitations they have refused. An eternal smile on their faces, and a kind salutation, sufficiently indicate to a stranger, those who are in easy circumstances and of hospitable dispositions. They are gay with the gay, taciturn with the grave, but, above all, excessively respectful to persons of rank and title.

Such was our town-major; and, with such qualities, it was not wonderful that he raised himself from the humble condition of a groom-porter in a gaming-house, to be the companion of gentlemen, and an officer in his majesty's service. His intimacy with Bertinval

commenced in those societies where fools make the fortune of sharpers and black-legs, and where honest, well-meaning men begin by being dupes, and finish, very often, by being knaves; for such is the natural order of things; and it was exemplified in the person of Bertinval. Stripped of his fortune, he sought to recover it by the same means that had been employed to fleece him; and finished by practising on others those lessons for which he had paid money, health, and good principles. He was a mere wreck at an age when men, in general, begin to play their parts on the stage of existence. The Baron D'Argenteuil had been his tutor from the age of fifteen to his full majority, and had given him the best education the colony could afford; but the moment he reached that age when young men of fortune assert

their independence by deriding authority and casting off restraint, Bertinval kept open house while he had any thing to spend, and sought distinction at the expense of his early associations, squandering his fortune and time in the midst of strangers, who forgot his person and his follies when they ceased to minister to their pleasures. When his embarrassments obliged him to leave the colony, he made his credulous uncle believe that a certain great personage encouraged him to go to England, to form such connections with men in power as could not fail to raise him to distinction, and send him back to his native country honoured with marks of royal favour.

Although the baron did not approve of the projects of his nephew, he was too indulgent to resist the inclinations of a young man who

seemed resolved to attach himself to the new government, and identify himself with it. He was, consequently, ignorant of the true motives of his nephew's departure from Canada. Thornwood had let Eustace too far into his friend Bertinval's secret to stop at a first confidence; and, unable to elude the constant and zealous investigation of a man whose inquiries were stimulated by a profound affection for Matilda, let out by degrees enough to alarm Eustace for the fate of that lovely and interesting creature, and decide him to admonish her family of the danger that seemed to menace them.

We do our hero the justice to believe, that there was nothing selfish in this resolution. He had no reasonable hope of replacing Bertinval; it is even possible that he would have sacrificed his own hopes, if he

entertained any, to any marriage with another that would secure her happiness. He had, indeed, resolved to remain single; but as a man in love is never, invariably, consistent in any plan of resignation, he resolved to write to the baron, with all the integrity of intention natural to one so young and inexperienced.

He did not stop to examine coldly, the impropriety of interfering in a matter so delicate; he was too ardent to wait patiently the development of events, that might, without indiscretion, furnish an occasion to serve the idol of his adoration. Fearful that D'Argenteuil might be so easily disposed as to engage himself irrevocably, he addressed to him the following epistle:—

“It is impossible, my lord, to have received from your interesting family the marks of

kindness with which I was honoured at the Lake of the Mountains, and remain indifferent to its happiness and prosperity. I believe both to be in jeopardy, and hold myself bound by honour and gratitude, to indicate the danger to which you are exposed, without waiting to examine whether I trespass the limits of common propriety, in a matter of which you alone are the exclusive and sovereign judge. I am convinced that you will interpret my conduct on this occasion in a manner that will, at least, do justice to my motives.

“A conversation that was held in my presence, between an officer of our garrison and your nephew, the Baron of Bertinval, has made me acquainted with a project you are said to cherish, of a marriage between him and your daughter.

“ This gentleman, I have good reason to believe, is ruined in fortune, and has acquired habits that cannot fail to disappoint every hope you may have formed for the happiness of your daughter. He has lost money at play, for which his honour is in pledge; and he relies on the resources of an alliance with his cousin to liquidate his engagements, and renew a train of existence he has quitted with regret, and cannot return to but with manifest injury to the happiness and independence of your house. The person from whom I have obtained the information I have the honour to transmit to you, is a party interested in the success of Mr. De Bertinval's expectations, and from what I know of his passed life, and present intimacy with your nephew, it seems to me impossible there should be any exaggeration in the com-

munication I make to you. I urge these facts on your notice, with a sorrow that can only be equalled by the pleasure I should feel to be convinced, that the person whom you have destined to so intimate an alliance with you, were every thing that could secure to you and your lovely daughter, the consummation of all your wishes."

This letter once on its way to the Lake of the Two Mountains, the mind of Eustace was more at ease; he had served the woman he adored, and acquitted himself of every kind of moral responsibility towards her father. The following week brought him the baron's answer, which we lay before our readers, who will be at no loss to perceive in it the type of the sentiments that were prevalent in France, fifty years ago, on the subject of marriage.

“ I thank you sincerely, my dear captain, for the friendly spirit that dictated your letter. I was not entirely ignorant of the *étourderies* of my nephew, and the state of his fortune is, I believe, as your informant has described it; but I do not partake of the conviction you derive from his passed habits, as it regards his future life. Marriage is a great reformer; and our laws enable me to secure the fortune I destine to his wife from the consequences of a love of extravagance and dissipation. I owe to your attachment to my family, an explanation of my intentions respecting my nephew and daughter. Bertinval is the only male relative I have in the world, and will answer all the purposes of a husband for my daughter; he will prevent my name from becoming extinct, and my daughter from choosing a husband among

strangers to my blood and nation, when I shall have paid the debt of nature, and left her unprotected.

“I hope soon to have the pleasure of another visit from you, although the war now declared against the neighbouring provinces, by calling you into more active service, diminishes the probability of a speedy meeting. Be that as it may, the best wishes and affections of my family circle accompany you, with those of your very sincere

“D’ARGENTEUIL.”

CHAPTER III.

Janctantius mærent quæ minus dolent.

ROMAN PROVERB.

EUSTACE was as far as ever from the result he had hoped to obtain from his letter to D'Argenteuil: he had fallen into a common error, that of judging other people's opinions by his own view of things.

The seeming indifference of the baron to the moral qualities of the man to whom he was about to confide his fortune and his only child, both shocked and astonished him.

Were I the father of Matilda, said he, I

would rather consign her to a cloister for life, than to the keeping of such a guardian as Bertinval: but, alas! D'Argenteuil considers a husband in no other light than an indispensable article of furniture, with two legs;—a “*meuble à deux pieds*,” as Madame de Belrose called her friend D'Etioles.

Discouraged and embarrassed with a hundred plans, which he conceived, and abandoned as ridiculous or impracticable, he at length resolved to write a confidential letter to the family chaplain, the good father Le Clerc, in the hope of engaging him to lead the baron to investigate more closely the character and condition of his nephew.

While at the castle of D'Argenteuil, he had many opportunities of conversing with, and admiring the heart and understanding of that truly pious and learned ecclesiastic, who loved

Matilda with a parent's love, and whose notions were in harmony with those of Eustace, on such topics of sentiment and morality as had been discussed in his presence. He had known Bertinval from his earliest years, and never saw in his conduct or disposition anything he could approve. He was always opposed to the baron's project, without the power of resisting it effectually; and if he did not inspire Matilda with a disgust of her cousin, at least shewed in his manner, whenever the subject of her marriage was mentioned, that he was not friendly to it. His disapprobation was conscientious and disinterested, founded upon his suspicion of the immorality of Bertinval, and consequent apprehension that he could not be a good husband.

De Courcy concluded, from several hints that had fallen from the chaplain, that he was

the most suitable person to be made acquainted with the information already transmitted to the baron; a copy of which he sent to him, with a confidential note, expressing his sorrow, that his interference in favour of Matilda had met with so cold a reception from her father.

Eustace continued to visit the town-major, in the hope of gathering from his indiscreet loquacity such occasional information as might keep him acquainted with the progress of the marriage; but this shy cock, had not forgotten the trepidation into which his recent imprudence had led him, and resolved to let nothing escape him that could expose him to future uneasiness or danger.

Things remained several months in this state of perplexing uncertainty for Eustace, when one morning he received a note from an unknown hand to the following effect:

"The interest you take in the welfare of the most noble and virtuous of human beings, is not unknown to her. She expected as much from the man of whom she had conceived the highest esteem, and in whose sentiments of honour and delicacy she would not scruple to place the most unbounded confidence, if any occasion should occur to render the exercise of either necessary to her. She may be exposed to severe trials, but she looks on them without dismay, and trusts to that divine Providence for the protection which she daily invokes.

"The writer of this will call on Captain De Courcy in a few weeks."

Our reader has probably divined that this letter could come from no other than father Le Clerc, the friend and confessor of Matilda.

The priests, who are placed at the head of

parishes and missions, in the district of Montreal, are subject to the control and superintendence of the seminary of that city. A part of the discipline renders it obligatory on them to visit the vicar-general once a year, render him an account of the moral and religious state of the people confided to their charge, and then retire, during thirty days, into a solitary apartment, to meditate in private on the manner in which they have respectively discharged their sacred duties. While this silent self-examination is carried on, no person is permitted to enter into the apartment or speak to the priest during the month of seclusion, except the person who performs the necessary domestic services, and carries the scanty allowance of food, which is furnished upon such occasions. Here the priest passes his own conduct in review ; weighs the motives, thoughts

and desires, that had directed him during the passed year ; and, at the expiration of thirty days, confesses his sins of omission or commission, to the superior, before receiving the sacrament. He then returns to his duty with renewed energy, and a disposition purified by abstinence, prayer, and communion with the supreme intelligence, refreshed in heart and strengthened in resolution.

It was the beginning of the month which the pious father Le Clerc devoted to this exercise, when Eustace received the letter, which promised him " farther information in a few weeks." He dwelled on the last line with impatience. In a few weeks, he murmured ; why keep me so long in suspense, if I can be useful ; am I not sufficiently unhappy to see the object of my best and holiest love in peril ?

At the promised period he received a welcome visit from the priest, and beheld with pleasure the benevolent and intelligent countenance of the fast and faithful friend of Matilda. Eustace had been slightly indisposed. The priest drew a chair towards his bed-side, took a pinch of snuff, and after the customary inquiries about health, asked him with an arch smile, if he had divined the author of the letter, thanking him for the friendly interest that led him to communicate to the baron what he had learned respecting Bertinval.

"I could only attribute it to one of three persons, most reverend father," said Eustace; "Madame de Belrose, the family physician, and yourself. The writing was not that of a lady, the doctor could scarce be in the secret; and after balancing probabilities, I naturally arrived at the conclusion, that it could only

come from the confessor and counsellor of Mademoiselle D'Argenteuil."

"Your inference, Captain De Courcy, was indeed natural; but are you not curious to learn whether we were acquainted with your letter to the baron, before the arrival of that which you had the kindness to address to me?"

"Very much indeed," said Eustace, since I can scarce suppose the baron would communicate what might tend to render his project abortive."

"The baron is still ignorant that his daughter has any knowledge of it. You must be aware, that in a position so far removed from the busy scenes of life, the events of one day resemble those of every other in the year. We have little correspondence with the world; a letter is not a common occurrence, and ex-

cites the curiosity of the family. When your's arrived, Matilda was in the outward court playing with her favourite spaniel, while Bellegarde was making ready to accompany her in a morning ride. She received it from the messenger, and at the first look remarked, that the writing was not that of a Frenchman, nor one she had ever seen; and knowing that her father had no other English correspondent, immediately suspected it came from you. This was confirmed by her father's conversation during several days after receiving it. He was in appearance ill at ease; talked often of you, and seemed desirous to sound his daughter's opinion of you, which only added to his embarrassment, as she never conceals her thoughts when called upon to express them. There was something affected in his manner when he asked her, whether she would like to see their English friend again, which did not

escape her keen perception; and as she suspected that the letter must contain something her father did not judge apropos to communicate, her curiosity was strongly excited. Her manner of speaking of you might even lead the baron to apprehend, that she had conceived a stronger liking for you than common acquaintance is likely to inspire. This rendered both the father and daughter unusually serious; and our daily meetings were less agreeable than usual. Madame De Belrose alone seemed insensible that any mystery was lurking in their minds. You probably know, that my position at the castle makes me the natural confidant of that virtuous family, especially when any trouble comes to ruffle the smooth surface of their peaceful existence. It is sometimes a difficult task to execute, and at the same time be faithful to one's own conscience. In this particular case, it was unusually so, on

account of the difference of opinion which I knew to exist between the parties most interested; but I find an infallible guide in my conscience, which cannot reconcile me to the union of a virtuous young person like Matilda, with a man whose passed conduct has offered no pledge, no indication even of any amiable or moral quality that could give her a chance of happiness in his society. Now, sir, if the circumstances stated in your letter be susceptible of proof, I have little doubt of engaging Matilda, if I should fail in persuading the baron, to refuse her hand to Bertinval, notwithstanding all the engagements that have been made. You will, therefore, perceive the motive of my visit to you, Captain De Courcy, and enable me to ascertain if all that is alleged against Bertinval be true."

"Alas! but too true," said Eustace; "and

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much as I admire and esteem Mademoiselle D'Argenteuil, I would learn with more pleasure that she had died in the lap of innocence, than be wedded to such a man as her cousin."

The priest resumed:—"The dark cloud hung for several days over the baron's brow, and gave us all an infinite deal of uneasiness. Matilda urged me to speak to her father. At first I hesitated, because I am not disposed to seek a confidence that is not freely offered; but finally, the importunities of Matilda banished my scruples, and I sought the baron in his study. Our intimacy authorized me to tell him, that I had perceived by his manner that something had given him pain, and that his reserve in relation to the cause, whatever it might be, could scarce fail to afflict those whose happiness was inseparable from his tranquillity.

“ ‘I am,’ said he, ‘out of spirits; I have reason to be so; I would have spoken to you of the cause, had I not been unwilling to give triumph to opinions at variance with my wishes, relating to the marriage of my daughter.’ He then shewed me your letter. When I had read it, he looked at me sternly, and said, ‘I know you are unfriendly to my nephew, and averse to my project, and yet I have set my heart on uniting these two last branches of the old tree, and placing my child under the protection of her nearest of kin, when it shall please heaven to deprive her of mine.’ Large drops fell from his eyes as he finished the sentence. I left nature to do her own work; and when his emotion had subsided and he appeared calm, I entered seriously into the question.

“ You do me wrong, my friend, I said, to

suppose me unfriendly to your nephew, or to any project that could assure your happiness or that of your family. Say that I am the enemy of his extravagance, his want of order, his religious opinions, and, if report be true, his immorality; but reserving these points, I must be the friend of the man you have chosen to be the husband of Matilda. Here his tears flowed abundantly; he pressed my hand, and said, 'you know how attached I was to my sister, the promises I made her at her dying hour, and the care I have taken of her child, whom I would make my own by adoption and marriage with my daughter. I cannot now, in his distress, although I may not be entirely satisfied with his passed conduct, abandon him to despair, and tear from my heart a project it has so long cherished. He is not the first young man who has been led astray by pas-

sion and evil communication, during the early stages of youth and irreflection, and yet returned to sentiments of reason and duty. Moreover, when he is married, he will have no opportunities of relapsing into vicious habits. Marriage is a great reformer; it awakens the best sympathies of our nature, and makes us ashamed of the follies we commit when we have no gentle influence to correct or to guide us.'

"I replied, that if marriage were a remedy for evil propensities, there would be a greater number of good and virtuous men in society; inasmuch, as seventeen out of twenty full-grown persons, quitted at some period of their lives a state of celibacy; that to make the experiment at the risk of compromising the happiness and vitiating the principles of an only daughter, appeared to me to be putting too

much at stake, more especially as she might dislike him personally, and submit rather to the necessity of obeying her father, than yield to her own inclinations; in which case, she would neither have the power or disposition to employ any salutary influence over her husband. I farther urged, that the safest course would be to examine scrupulously how far reports respecting Bertinval might be true, and wait with patience till he paid his visit to the castle, that we might have farther opportunities of judging him, and watching the progress he might make in gaining the good graces of his intended bride.

“The baron, though still clinging to his long-formed project, and willing to repulse every thing that might impede its execution, or render it problematical, could not but admit that there was some reason in my counsel;

and I avail myself of my annual retreat at the seminary, to carry the first part of my plan into effect."

"I had flattered myself, reverend sir, when I received your letter, a month passed, that Mademoiselle D'Argenteuil had some knowledge of the communication I made to her father, and that she approved of the interest I took in her happiness."

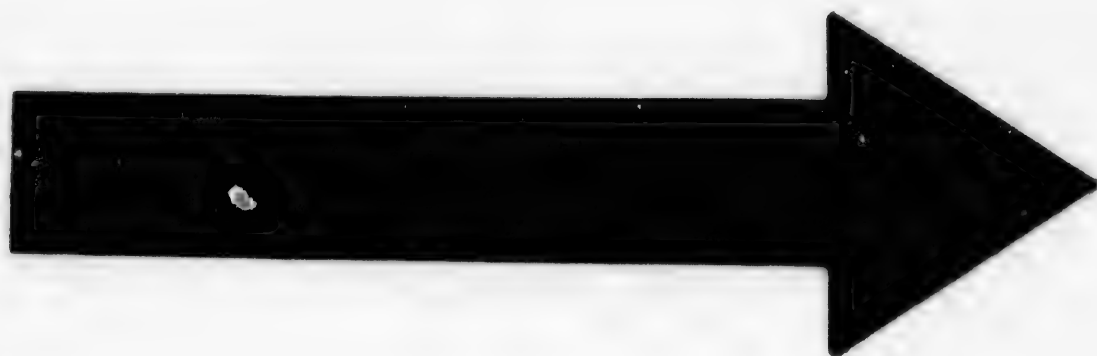
"You are right, captain, in your conjecture. Having determined to save her, if possible, I concealed nothing from her. She will treat the matter with suitable firmness. I was led to disclose all I knew of it from the reflection, that her father might act on his own view of the case, which I know to be obscured by a long-cherished partiality for his nephew. Matilda might thus become the victim of unreflecting obedience, which, in matters of

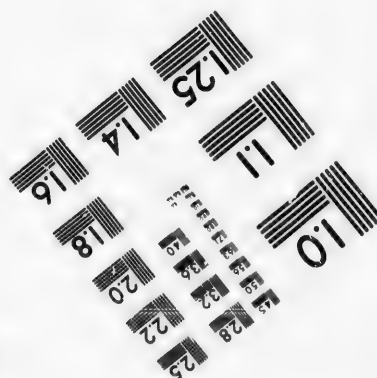
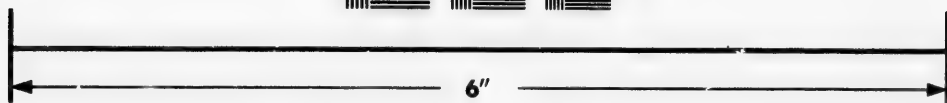
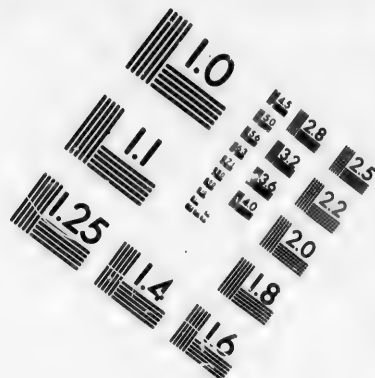
minor importance, she has been taught to observe as a duty. Holding, as I do, that duty may be perverted by an inflexible and injudicious application to the acts of erring mortals, I have judged it prudent to enlighten her understanding on this important and irreparable measure. Providence will do the rest."

"Providence will do the rest," said Eustace, with vivacity; "and you are the instrument employed in mercy to save the child, and spare the father years of sorrow and regret."

"And how, reverend sir, did she receive the information that a stranger took so deep an interest in her welfare?"

"With gratitude, as you may suppose; and she expects your farther aid in furnishing the means of clearing up the mystery that hangs





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over her cousin's passed conduct, and, perhaps, of dissuading her father from encouraging his addresses, which she seems for the present disposed to reject."

"Unfortunately," replied Eustace, "my means are limited to the will of a man who is interested in concealing the truth, and who is probably grieved at having so far exposed an associate in his vices. If Bertinval obtain the hand and fortune of his cousin, that person will receive a sum of money for a gambling debt, for which, I am informed, he holds a bond, the payment of which is contingent upon that event."

"I lament, Captain De Courcy, that you are not at liberty to mention the name of that person, since I might purchase the written obligation; and, armed with such a document, I could almost answer for the success of my endeavours."

"That may not be, reverend father. I have pledged my word, perhaps imprudently, but I have pledged it, to conceal his name. In my letter to the baron, I went to the utmost limits permitted by my engagement, and consistent with good faith; and although I feel little respect for the individual, and am indifferent to his displeasure or resentment, I am bound by my promise until it may be possible to obtain a release from him. This may, in all probability, be done by the purchase of Mr. Bertinval's bond. The man only values money; and would probably betray his secret if he could derive any advantage from it."

"I shall soon learn," said the priest, "who is his most intimate acquaintance. There are not, perhaps, two persons in Montreal who knew him in England; the circle he moves in here is so small, that it will not be a dif-

difficult matter to gain all the information I want. Until this can be accomplished, let me intreat you, Captain De Courcy, to continue in the friendly disposition that dictated your letter to the baron; and if any new light fall under your observation, I shall be happy to be deemed worthy of your confidence."

"You may rely on my zeal, reverend sir," said Eustace, giving the good clergyman his hand. "I shall not be slow in pushing my researches as far as they can be of any avail; and I beg you to carry this assurance to the object of your solicitude."

Father Le Clerc took leave, with assurances of gratitude towards the young officer; and Eustace, left alone with renewed hopes, soon recovered from an indisposition that was more mental than physical.

CHAPTER IV.

Embowell'd!—if thou

Embowel me to-day, I'll give you leave to powder me
And eat me too to-morrow.

SHAK. *Henry iv.*

No hay cosa mas fácil que hacer mal

Ni cosa mas dificultosa que sufrirlo.

MIREMBERG. *Spanish Proverb.*

RECENT arrivals from Europe brought Eustace letters from his family and friends; among these was one from the colonel of the regiment in which he had served in Ireland. This officer, promoted to the rank of general, had just been appointed governor of Halifax; and, anxious to have Eustace near his person,

offered him the choice of several places. He did not a moment hesitate to refuse. War had been declared; he was near the theatre on which he might play an active part; and any thing like a sinecure was unsuited to his ardent and ambitious spirit. Such situations, he would say, are only fit for men like Thornwood, who possess none of the sacred fire that animates the breast of a true soldier, and makes it beat with the love of glory and distinction.

In addition to his desire to signalize himself, Eustace could not leave the country where he might be useful to the object of his affections. Honour alone could command him to leave Canada; its voice alone was stronger than that of love. His desire to render Thornwood useful in the investigation he had commenced in favour of Matilda, was not long unsatisfied.

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This unlucky wight, ever thoughtless and imprudent, in spite of his timidity and self-love, had fallen into new difficulties, by making free with the name of an Irish lady, married to what was called in the regiment "the fire eater, from the mountains of Kerry." Mr. Denis Blake very unceremoniously called upon him, and kindly proposed to him "to ask the lady's pardon on his bended knees, unless he preferred settling the matter by a shot or two across the table." Thornwood, who valued himself on his chivalrous spirit, at once declared there was no humiliation in asking pardon of offended beauty, and went through the ceremony dictated by the husband with all imaginable grace and courtesy. He begged that it might be kept a profound secret, inasmuch as nothing could give him so much pain, as to be thought ill-natured in any observations

he might inconsiderately make on the fair sex, which he professed to love, honour and obey. Unhappily for the gallant town-major, such secrets, like those of a comedy, are known to the audience as soon as they are uttered; and the murmurs at the mess-table the same day, menaced the offender with a round-robin, which should exclude him from the society of the officers. In this new emergency, he had again recourse to the generous De Courcy for advice and consolation. Both were administered, but upon conditions which, for the better development of our history, we must explain in detail.

One morning the major presented himself before him, and with a most subdued look and humble tone, announced that a new calamity had befallen him, and upon the kindness of Eustace alone depended his reputation and tranquillity.

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"What now," said Eustace smiling; has Major Thornwood been sick of indigestion, lost money at play, or discovered some abandoned fair one, just arrived from London to claim the rank of wife and the protection of a false partner?"

"None of these, my dear De Courcy, none of these, but much worse, 'pon my honour, you know. I am a lost man,—dead mutton, you know, if you with your brave heart and good head refuse me assistance. I must be off, decamp, or become food for the worms, you know."

"You have not committed murder, I'll be sworn," said Eustace, laughing at the knight's rueful countenance.

"No, my dear fellow; if I must, you know, I must, that's all; but, d—n me if nature ever intended me for a man of troubles, as the say-

ing is; and, if the truth must be told, I know nothing about fighting; and yet—(hesitating,)—and yet, I feel that with your help, I could come to the scratch, and die like an honest man.”

“Be brief, major,” said Eustace, who now began to perceive that it was no matter for mirth that had brought the poor fellow to him.

“Why then, sir, there is a combination against me, and I am in danger of being put into Coventry; so, you know, I must either be killed or quit the camp. And for me, who have rendered service to every one, and who only wish to live in peace, it's a d—d hard case. But it shall be as you advise, Captain De Courcy. I put myself under your wing. With you I have no secrets: you know my origin, my struggles to break through the ob-

stacles of birth and poverty; my desire to please every one, and be no man's enemy; and now, having a snug situation, you know, it will never do to be cast afloat again into the wide world. But I will fight, if you advise me; I will not dishonour your protection."

"You have not yet explained to me, major, the necessity of choosing between these evils; perhaps they may both be avoided;—pray come to the point.—Who is going to propose to the officers to put you into Coventry?"

"Why then, here it is:—a few evenings ago I took tea with a small party at old surgeon Green's;—you know Green,—a Galway man, who makes his wife and daughters hold candles while he snuffs them at twelve paces with patent pistols,—regular Wogdan's, 'pon my honour, you know. So the conversation turned upon the last ball.—I hate ridiculous look-

ing people at our subscription balls, you know.—I just said we ought to be more particular in our invitations; and that I remarked some ladies as vulgar as pot-ash at the last one, whose red arms were scarcely covered with soiled gloves, and all that kind o' thing, you know. So Green defied me to point out one lady who might not be admitted into good company. Finding myself pushed, you know, I replied that there was the wife of a lieutenant, whose large feet were made to kill cock-roaches rather than dance. Green reddened, and asked me to name the person to whose presence I had taken exception. This I refused, not wishing to carry the thing any farther, you know. So he rose in a passion, and swore that there was but one lieutenant in the regiment married, and that his wife was his own born sister, of the Greens of Green's

Cross, in the sweet county of Galway; and that any man who said black was the white of her eye, should pay for his peeping. I was struck dumb with confusion, you know: I asked a thousand pardons for the mistake, and left the company, determined never to make an ill-natured remark again in a mixed company."

"Nor in any company, however select, if you will take my counsel," said Eustace; "people who have natural defects, are unhappy enough to be obliged to carry them about in broad sunshine, without incurring the additional mortification of being put in mind of them."

"But she was not present, you know, she did not hear me; for the world I would not be so wanting in good manners to make the observation that escaped me to her face."

"That may be, my good major; but recollect,

' Full many a shaft, at random sent,
Found mark the archer never meant.'

So I am to understand that the brother, as in duty bound, called you out for criticising the shape of his sister's feet?"

"God bless you! no such thing; a d—d deal worse; she told her husband; that mad fellow, you know, who leaps over tables covered with bottles and glasses, sings 'O Whack, Judy O'Flanaghan, and boasts of having shot eight dead, and wounded eleven, in different affairs of honour, since he left school, in the parish of Bullyhagart. So, to be brief, Denis Blake came dancing into my chamber before I was out of my bed, and swore he would carry me naked to the south rampart, and put an end to me, if I did not instantly dress and beg

his wife's pardon. Now, you know, this is a most unofficer and ungentleman-like mode of settling an affair of honour; so having no person at hand to consult, and thinking it but right to make the lady "*amende honorable*," I agreed to go and ask her pardon."

"And it is for this, major, that you are threatened with exclusion from the mess?"

"Why no, not precisely; but nearly about the thing, you know."

"Thornwood, be explicit, if you wish me to take the responsibility of advising you; there must be something else to your charge to engage the officers to expel you from their society."

"Nothing: nothing of consequence, I assure you; just a little condescension on my part to the lady;—only to the lady, you know."

"What was that condescension to the lady?"

Have you any objection to relate what I shall probably hear with ten-fold exaggeration at the mess-table to-day?"

"Why, captain, you know my habits of gallantry to ladies, my Chesterfield way of doing things, as they say in society. I asked pardon on my knees."

"On your knees, major?"

"Yes, on my knees; the idea just came into my head at the moment, you know:

"The prostrate lover when he lowest lies,
But stoops to conquer, and but kneels to rise."

Eustace could no longer preserve his gravity: he laughed till tears ran down his cheeks, and the major joined as heartily in laughing at the ridiculous part of his story, as if he were not interested in the sequel.

"Then I presume," said Eustace, "like the fat knight in 'The Merry Wives of Wind-

sor,' you remained on your knees unable to rise until the lieutenant came to help you?"

"No, no, my dear fellow, give you my word of honour; O, d—n me! not come to that yet; on the contrary, I rose with a good grace, and wa ked off."

"So, major, this is the head and front of your offending. Well, I shall hear what the officers say of it to-day at dinner, and shall be better able to give you counsel this evening. Come to me at eight o'clock."

At the regimental mess-table, the subject that so much distressed the town-major, was replete with matter of merriment for the officers, and every thing ludicrous in his character was treated with severity.

It would be death to the poor man, said De Courcy, to learn that he is made the sport of a society whose respect he must

obtain, if he mean to live in it. But one way to regain this seemed open to the bold spirit of Eustace, which was, to fight the officers into a good opinion of him, and challenge those first who had taken the greatest liberties with his name. To this experiment he apprehended that Thornwood was unequal; and should he quail in the execution, his retreat from the service would be inevitable. After resolving the matter in his mind, Eustace felt disposed to silence the clamour that was raging against the town-major, by making himself an interested party, and declaring his good opinion of him, in such terms as became a defender rather than a judge. This resolution taken, he demanded whether the party offended was satisfied with the atonement made by the major.

“Perfectly satisfied,” replied Blake, “as

regards myself: I ordered him to ask pardon, on his knees, and he obeyed without hesitation."

"You ORDERED him?" said Eustace, with a look of astonishment!

"Yes, to be sure," replied Blake; "he only escaped chastisement on that condition."

"Then I am to understand that this act of condescension was not voluntary?"

"That, indeed," said the company, with one voice, "would be surprising."

Eustace was silent; he saw at once that the unhappy man, in narrating to him the concession he had made to appease the wounded pride of the lady, had omitted the material point, of which he was too much ashamed to speak: so without waiting to witness the decision of the mess, he took his leave, and returned to his lodging, where

he found Thornwood, waiting in trembling anxiety, to be made acquainted with his fate. His fears were not calmed by the austere looks of De Courcy, who scarcely deigned to notice him.

After a long pause: "I have a question to put to you, sir," said Eustace; "my conduct towards you will be regulated by your answer. Is it true, as Lieutenant Blake asserts, that your condescension, as you are pleased to call your kneeling scene with the lady, was the result of compulsion, and made a positive condition of obtaining the pardon of the husband?"

"Why, really I forgot to mention that particular circumstance, Captain De Courcy; I now recollect that Blake did say nothing else would satisfy him."

"Then you are as great a fool as coward," thundered Eustace, in a voice that made the

poor major's heart die within him; "for you could not hope to live twenty-four hours in a society that was made acquainted with such an act of humiliation."

"I told you I must decamp," said the terrified man; there is no balm in Gilead; no chance of repairing such weakness; I am ruined,—lost for ever!" He beat his forehead, his tears flowed, and attempting to leave the room, he sunk lifeless on the floor.

De Courcy rang the bell, and ordered Bill Holdbrook to run for the surgeon. He soon returned, and found the major of a livid colour, breathing heavily and foaming at the mouth. With the aid of Bill Holdbrook he was laid on the table, and bled copiously from both arms. He recovered slowly, and reason returned only to shew him the horror of his situation. He again wept bitterly, and supplicated De Courcy in such terms not to aban-

don him, that pity soon replaced disgust in that noble and generous breast.

“ I pity you, Thornwood,” said he, “ and will think how I may assist you. In the mean time, my servant will accompany you to your lodgings, where you would do well to close your door against visitors. I shall call on you when I have made up my mind how I can serve you in your present distress. Nature has been unkind to you in depriving you of that firmness of constitution necessary to maintain your dignity among your fellow men; and you have made an injudicious choice of a profession, in which contempt of life is the leading virtue. Those who will blame you most loudly, are probably the nearest akin to your failings; as that virtue which is the most likely to succumb in the hour of trial, is the least indulgent towards the frailty of others.

CHAPTER V.

Poderoso caballero
Es Don Dinero.

SPANISH PROVERB.

A most potent knight
Is Sir Silver Bright.

DE COURCY when alone, delivered himself to the train of reflections that naturally flowed from the transactions of the day, and the melancholy scene he had just witnessed.

What a calamity, said he, to be reduced, like this unhappy man, to the necessity of seeking from others, that aid which ought to be found in man's own bosom. What a sad picture of weakness and fatuity. Thornwood

is not a villain; he is vain, silly and timid; without sufficient judgment to avoid difficult situations, or energy to get out of them. Educated among sharpers and black-legs, and accustomed to witness mean actions, and often see them triumph, he thinks human conduct the mere art of a juggler, whose success depends on his address and skill. That self-respect, which never slumbers in the breast of a man of true honour,—that profound conviction that *virtue is happiness*,—those holy recollections of virtuous parents and a religious education, are unknown to such men. With them, vanity supplies the want of principle and self-esteem, cunning and dissimulation are ever at work to disguise themselves under a mask of probity and candour, and the total absence of personal dignity, makes them timid and mean, when danger calls upon them to assert and de-

fend their title to consideration. Thornwood has his vocation; in all others, he is in a false position: the *rateau* of a groom-porter at a gaming-table, is a more suitable instrument for his hand to wield than the sword of an officer. His own inspirations do not deceive him; he cannot wipe off this last stain on his reputation; he can only "pass without censure when he passes without observation;" he must, as he truly says, decamp. He is known to my friend, General Saunders, in whose regiment he commenced his military career; and perhaps a charitable recommendation from me, may procure for him at Halifax, some employment to keep him from starving. The following evening, when it was too late to be remarked, Eustace went to the lodgings of Thornwood. He found him in a state of debility and despair.

“ I have a plan for you, Thornwood,” said he ; “ if you adopt it, I trust to your present sufferings to remind you always of their cause and origin, and keep you within sober limits, where no trouble enters but such as you may successfully combat with a little reason and patience.” He then communicated the letter he had received from their ancient colonel, and offered to recommend Thornwood to his protection and good-nature. “ You have useful talents ; employ them with modesty, probity and assiduity, and leave to time and good conduct the task of healing the wound your reputation and sensibility have received. The place of town-major at Montreal will be no serious loss ; your half-pay of lieutenant, and some little place that the governor of Halifax may bestow upon you, without inconvenience to himself, or injustice to others, will enable

you to live honestly. There are other remedies to which you might resort, if this plan should not please you, but they are suited to stronger stomachs, and come a little too late, were you capable to digest them."

Nothing could surpass the gratitude of poor Thornwood; he adopted, without hesitation, the proposal of Eustace, and talked of packing up immediately, when a thought struck him, that his disposable funds were insufficient to pay his debts and conduct him to his destined post. This necessity Eustace kindly undertook to supply, upon the pledge of Bertinval's bond.

"You are too good, too generous," said Thornwood; "this bond may eventually be of some value, but not in other hands. In my present state of mind, I should deem myself the basest of mankind, were I capable to de-

ceive my benefactor, by permitting him to rely on the good faith of the debtor. It is a gambling-debt, and you must be aware that a recovery cannot be enforced in a court of law."

"Then you set no value on this bond, having no confidence in the probity of Bertinval?"

"None whatever," my dear sir; "but there are matters, I mean secrets relating to him, known only to me, which I could turn to good account, should he ever, by any fortunate circumstance, become solvent."

"And these secrets, major, you seem inclined to keep from the knowledge of others? I do not blame you if your faith be pledged; on the contrary, I commend your fidelity, and pretend to no right to question you farther."

"Right, my dear sir! you have every right

to command my confidence; your conduct towards me, and my determination to merit a continuance of it, impose equally upon me the obligation to conceal nothing from you.

“ I will leave the bond with you, on condition, not to use it but in the greatest extremity; when I have a little time for reflection, and my feelings are restored to their wonted tone I will explain myself farther: only recollect, there is a mystery hanging over this affair, which, if once disclosed, would render the payment impossible.” Here Thornwood grew silent and meditative; he seemed to descend into his conscience, to examine how far his engagements towards Bertinval might authorize him to make disclosures to De Courcy; then, observing that the latter had fixed his scrutinizing eyes upon him, to read, if possible, his emotions in his face, he resumed: “ If I

take the money your kindness offers in my present unhappy condition, it is but reasonable that I give you all the means I myself possess, to obtain in due time the payment of the pledge I place in your hands; and yet, (hesitating,) "you are not the kind of man to employ such means efficaciously."

"If the means be such as may be resorted to with honour," said De Courcy.

"Ay, sir, there's the rub. All I can say to you at present is, that you would never be paid, just because you would not keep the secret, upon which, perhaps, Bertinval's fortune depends."

We need not tell our reader, that the curiosity of De Courcy was wound up to the highest pitch. He would have given the mines of Golconda to obtain, without restriction, the secret which Thornwood seemed labouring to

conceal. Little prone to suspect evil, and wholly ignorant of the possibility of turning it to any useful purpose, still he possessed strong and keen perspicacity, and this, stimulated by his desire to serve his beloved Matilda, made him, more than usually, clear sighted. He weighed, he analyzed the words of Thornwood ; he inferred, that something important to the fate of the object of his affections depended on the sagacity of his conduct, and suggested the utility of a little diplomacy in his manner : so, affecting an air of indifference, he said, " whatever it may be your purpose to reveal or conceal, is of little moment to my present intention, which is to serve you as I can, not doubting your disposition to make a suitable return, if it be in your power. I am not rich ; all the money I can dispose of is only two hundred pounds ; if the repayment of

it depends upon a secret I might not think fit to keep, your responsibility towards me is cancelled, and I take the deposit at my own risk."

"You are the kindest man on earth, Captain De Courcy," said Thornwood, delighted at the prospect of fingering the two hundred pounds, on a pledge that might never be available. "I will not be out done in generosity; here is the bond; and I pledge all that I hold most sacred, to furnish you in due time with written documents that Bertinval will, if he be able, purchase cheaply by the payment of it."

This was all Eustace could obtain from the scruples of Thornwood for the moment; so he went to his lodging, and returned with all the money he possessed, trusting to Providence for a fresh supply.

Thornwood, thus provided with the means of "breaking new ground," as he called it,

loaded Eustace with expressions of gratitude. His joy was as extravagant as his grief had been poignant. He was one of those weak men whose faults would be crimes, were his intentions criminal. Eustace gave him a letter to General Saunders, admonished him to beware of new errors, and bade him adieu.

Thornwood, before setting out, called to take leave of his old friend Bertinval, who had already left Montreal on a visit to his uncle at the Lake of the Two Mountains; whither we shall take leave to conduct our reader, leaving Eustace to his reflections, and Thornwood to pursue his journey to Halifax, where he readily found, through the kind protection of his old commander, a small employment, that (as he wrote to Eustace,) enabled him "to keep the wolf from the door."

CHAPTER VI.

To gain the point to which our soul aspires
 We nourish toil, and reek hard labour sweet :
 For this, through Greenland's frosts, through India's fires,
 The hardy sailors, death and danger meet ;
 And the proud chieftain, bolder than discreet,
 In blood imbrued pursues the martial fray ;
 And lovers' eke through life's loud tempests beat,
 Led on by hope, that never-dying ray :
 Hope wantons in their breast, and strews with flow'rs the way.

The Squire of Dames.

BERTINVAL's visit to the castle was the result of an invitation from the Baron D'Argenteuil, who adhered to his project of bestowing on him his daughter in marriage, with all the pertinacity of a man unused to contradiction and resolved to have his own way in all mat-

ters relating to his family. He determined to withdraw him from the society of the city, in the belief that a residence at the castle would wean him by degrees from the irregular courses into which he had fallen, and by time and opportunity make him personally agreeable to his daughter.

In consequence of this wise resolution, he wrote to his nephew, expressing his desire that he would take up his abode at the Lake of the Two Mountains, and seek by every means in his power to win the esteem of Matilda, who had, he remarked *en passant*, much in her disposition that might render a marriage with a man she had not seen since her childhood, a matter of infinite difficulty. In obedience to this summons, Bertinval hastened to the castle, and after a long private conference with his uncle, in which neither submission to the old

lord's injunctions, nor promises to be directed in every thing by his opinions, were spared, he was formally presented to Matilda, as her future husband, and the heir of the house of D'Argenteuil. Matilda who, as our reader may have noticed, was not accustomed to disguise her feelings on any subject, turned towards her father with vivacity, and said,

"My dear father, I have a question to ask you."

"What is it, my love?"

"You know the proverb "*qui ne dit rien consent*;" now I want to know if my silence on this occasion is to be construed according to the common rule?"

"I shall reserve my answer," said the baron colouring, "to a fitting occasion; more especially as I am not in a humour to be questioned on the propriety of my decisions in

matters that belong exclusively to my jurisdiction."

Madame De Belrose trembled; the chaplain left the group; Bertinval was disconcerted; Matilda alone seemed perfectly at her ease. Her nerves were firm, her mind resolute; and undisciplined as she was in the ways of common life, would have flatly refused, had her father persisted in urging an immediate decision on a matter he had so abruptly and unguardedly introduced. But she had said enough to convince her family, that she was inclined to set limits to obedience, and exercise, on great occasions, a moral agency, for which she felt accountable only to her creator.

In order to dissipate the painful impression this short conversation had produced, she invited her cousin to a seat, and began to question him with good-natured and easy assu-

rance, about his travels, the society and manners of the English people, the inconvenience and amusements of mixed society; to all which Bertinval answered in the manner the most likely to set himself off to advantage. At dinner she was attentive and polite to him, as if she had determined before-hand to make him amends for the mortification and disappointment she had reserved for him on the subject of his visit, whenever it might be seriously discussed.

Bertinval, whose time had been spent in the society of women, whose education and habits imposed little restraint on their manners and conversation, was, in some measure, the dupe of his cousin's kind attentions. He thought she was playing a part common to her sex; and having soon recovered from the effects of the first shock, flattered himself that his ad-

dress, aided by time, would surmount every obstacle to the consummation of his project. Women, said he, are taught to dissimulate; the first lessons they receive when they are out of leading-strings, teach them to conceal their own desires and excite those of others. A little assiduity, said he, will, seconded by the authority of her father, lead to the accomplishment of my wishes, and put me in possession of the means of reappearing in the world with *éclat*. The baron himself was not without hopes that such would be the issue of his plan, inasmuch as his daughter had never shewn any symptoms of resistance to his authority; nevertheless he deemed it prudent to wait patiently, rather than expose himself to a serious misunderstanding with her, and provoke an act of insubordination, that might alarm his pride and wound his self-love. He

sought auxiliaries in his sister and the chaplain; the former could give no opinion as to Matilda's inclinations, and father Le Clerc peremptorily declined the responsibility of advising what he did not approve. In consulting them the baron insisted on the legitimacy of his right to dispose of his daughter, which he held to be as divine as that of the *grand monarch* to dispose of his subjects "according to his royal will and pleasure;" but how to compel passive obedience, was a question he had not duly considered.

Time rolled on without any solution of this great question. Bertinval was assiduous in his attentions; he accompanied his cousin in her walks and rides, and with much address sought to sound her intentions. She remained impenetrable. Her conversation only tended to convince him, in spite of his wishes, that

she could conceive of no happiness equal to the liberty and independence she had hitherto enjoyed. Nevertheless, his vanity whispered that this incertitude could not last long, and hope gave him perseverance. He often fancied that her object was to render the conquest difficult; and yet he knew not how to reconcile this female diplomacy with the artless mind of an untutored girl, unskilled in the commerce of the world. Wearied with an incertitude, which circumstances best known to himself rendered painful and dangerous, he at last ventured to urge her to a decision. He chose for the most propitious moment one of their morning rides, when she seemed in a disposition to listen to him with complacency.

"You know, my fair cousin," said he, "that from my earliest years I have been brought up in the belief that we were one day to be

united ; your father soothed the dying hour of his beloved sister with that hope, when you and I were yet infants ; and, naturally desirous to see so reasonable a project consummated, he has authorized me to seek your consent. To be plain with you, I do not perceive that I have advanced a single step, since my arrival at the castle." Here he paused for an answer ; Matilda gave none ; but listened to his speech with deep attention. " You are now," he continued, " of an age, when this matter must occasionally occupy your thoughts ; and unless you have some secret motive, unknown to your family, for postponing your approbation of this family compact, I may, without indiscretion, importune you to make me the happiest of men."

" I could scarce suppose," said Matilda, " that any person who has lived so long in my society, could be at a loss to discover the true

state of my inclinations. I have never had a wish to change my present condition for one with whose duties I am ignorant. If this ignorance be bliss, it were folly to seek wisdom in a measure, where a false step is irreparable. I know the common opinion is, that some time or other, a woman ought to be married, and I do not impugn that opinion, since it is received as a general truth in society; but I unhappily believe, that there are inspirations as necessary to make a good marriage as a good poem. These I have not yet felt. My wishes are sober. I am satisfied with the affection of my family, and the total exemption I enjoy from all kind of care and responsibility. Until I become convinced of the necessity or utility of marrying, I must insist on my right to remain single, in spite of the solicitude of my family and friends."

"You have said, my dear cousin," replied Bertinval, "that a false step would be irreparable; but have you reflected, that this is only possible when the parties are strangers to each other? The mariner has neither rocks nor quick-sands to fear in a sea that is well known to him."

"I am not insensible," said Matilda, "of the advantage to which you allude; but I repeat, that until my inclinations second the wishes of my father, I shall remain single." So saying, she galloped off, leaving her cousin to his reflections, which, as the sequel will prove, were not of the most brilliant colour.

He did not seek to join her until she reached the castle. Strong as he felt himself in the support of her father, he determined to "wait and hate," and resolved in his dark and corrupt spirit, the means of securing her fortune,

since he could not flatter himself to possess her person. His pride was wounded; but this only made him more determined not to relinquish his hold on his uncle, or cast away, by any act of his own, the material good he expected from the baron's promises and partiality. His attentions to Matilda were no longer importunate; he sought to gain the good opinion of her aunt, and turn to good account her weak and amiable disposition. Nothing, said he, is lost upon a lady of a certain age, who has ever been handsome; every act of homage is received with gratitude; the altar upon which incense has been burned, will never be wanting in a deity propitious to the acolyte who presents his offerings. Bertinval, resolved to gain partisans in the garrison of the enemy, never quitted the side of his aunt in her walks, never relaxed in his atten-

tions to her in society ; her tales of ancient times were listened to with patience : her opinions assented to with deference ; and the most edifying philosophy was constantly poured into her ear, of the necessity of young people allowing themselves to be guided by parents, whose tact, experience and opportunities of judging accurately, had been formed in the first societies in France. In short, he gained so complete an ascendancy over the good lady, that she undertook to lecture her niece, on what she called her obstinacy and blindness to her duty and interest.

“ Matilda,” said she, as they walked together in the garden, “ I want to converse with you on an affair that gives us all much pain and anxiety. You must have remarked that for some time passed your father has been dull and apparently unhappy ; his manner is no

longer affable and benevolent, his brow is clouded, and with every thing in life to render him happy, he is evidently wretched. You, my love, are the cause of this change in him."

"In what way, my dear aunt, have I been guilty of the crime which you lay to my charge?"

"In opposing his will in relation to your establishment."

"Is it my fault that I do not love my cousin, or that he has not found out the manner of gaining my affections?"

"These notions are good in the minds of Alpine shepherdesses, my dear niece; but for people who have fortune, rank, and an ancient name to preserve, they are (forgive me the expression,) injurious, if not ridiculous: ladies marry because their parents cannot live for

ever, and afford that protection, of which they stand in need."

"Now I understand," said Matilda, "that my person and affections are to be disposed of by my family, as I give my purse to a beggar, without the thing bestowed being a party to the gift, or exercising on the propriety or expediency of the act, any moral feeling. This may do for vile metal, but in reason and justice is wholly inapplicable to my case."

"Your person and fortune, my dear, are disposed of for your own advantage; but your affections are free from restraint. There is no knowledge of the future that can enable you to decide when these will be called into action, or in favour of whom they may be excited. If young girls were only to wed when they are in love, all the wise and salutary combinations of families would be unavailing."

"Then, my good aunt, according to your doctrine, I am to go before the altar and call God and man to witness, that I LOVE, HONOUR AND OBEY" my husband, when, in reality, nothing is farther from my thoughts; and I begin a new life, full of moral and religious duties, by surrendering my claim on the divine aid, and cheating the man who believes in my sincerity and good faith! I am to live with a person who is the dupe of my promise; I must rise every morning, and lay my head on my pillow every night, with the consciousness that I have been guilty of a gross imposture,—and all this to please my family! This is not the integrity of intention my father has always called noble; this is not the religion father Le Clerc has inculcated. I dislike my cousin; and nothing can induce me to say, much less to engage myself by a solemn vow, that I do or shall ever love him."

"Then, Matilda, you will disobey your father and break his heart."

"My father knows I would give my life to assure his happiness; but my father's tranquillity cannot depend upon my committing an immoral act."

"I always told my brother," said Madame De Belrose, "that his notions on female education were false. In my youth I was taught to obey."

"And I, to THINK," said Matilda.

"Then, my niece, I am to conclude, that you hold yourself free to dispose of your person, even contrary to the will of your family?"

"No," said the impatient girl; "I am bound to consult my father's will and the honour of my family; and no selfish desire, no imaginary good, shall ever lead me to put either in the balance against my own opinion."

"But, suppose your father should demand your obedience, as the price of his protection?"

"My father, like all father's, is the natural protector of his child. His authority, however sacred in my eyes, is not absolute, since the sovereign from whom it is derived, has set such limits as reason and justice to His supreme will. We must accept all government on the principle of benevolence and justice; and you do my father wrong, to suppose him capable of discarding or disavowing his child: but were the case you suppose a possible one, I would still refuse to marry my cousin."

"You will think better of it, my niece, unless your heart, as I suspect, be pre-occupied with a gentleman, who, probably does not think of you; and were it otherwise, could never obtain you with my brother's consent."

Matilda was silent.

“Let it be remembered,” continued Madame De Belrose, “that I objected to that familiarity that my brother established between you and that English officer, when he was indisposed at our house. Mademoiselle De Clermont said ‘nothing was so dangerous in the breast of a young person as pity.’ I do not blame you for this; your father would have his own way; you recollect, my dear, my objections to such sudden intimacies. I always said your education was more suitable for a man than a woman.”

“I recollect that you objected to my seconding my father in acts of hospitality and kindness to Captain De Courcy; but I cannot admit, that my refusing to wed Mr. De Bertinval is a necessary consequence of that condescension on my part.”

"But you seem to avoid a direct answer to my conjecture, Matilda."

"I only owe to my confessor an avowal of my private thoughts. While my conduct is free from reproach, I cannot recognize in any person the right to assume premises for the sake of concluding me culpable. I have not read, that even the inquisition goes quite so far."

"I perceive, Matilda, that I have not your confidence. I have, nevertheless, your interest alone at heart; you are the sole object of my anxiety, my care, on this side the tomb."

Here the poor lady wept; and Matilda, better able to resist a bad argument than an ebullition of tenderness, embraced her affectionately.

"You came to me, dearest aunt," said she, "as the advocate of a project I have made

up my mind to resist. I have given you my reasons, and have not, as you suspect, any secrets hidden from you. Whatever be my opinion of the merits of Captain De Courey, it is not likely that I shall ever be seriously called upon to give it, as in the case of my cousin. Let us live in peace and love as hitherto, and leave to Providence to direct us in the hour of need."

It was not in the power of Madame De Belrose to make a long struggle; she cordially returned the tenderness of her niece, and soon talked on indifferent matters. The good lady's opinions were formed in early life, and when she yielded them, her conviction remained unchanged. She was of that numerous class of mortals who never change, and, consequently, never correct errors or prejudices.

The dinner-bell summoned them to the drawing-room, where they found an unexpected guest, of whom we shall speak in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

Sweet frolic spring! thy spirit breathes above
 The meads where thou art born, and melts the hearts
 Of youths and tender maids.
 With influences soft
 Thou makest Feeling victor; heaven through thee
 Each blooming breast more fair, more tremblingly;
 With disenchanted mouth
 Love louder speaks through thee!

KLOSTERCK. *The Lake of Zurich.*

We have already remarked, that war had been declared by Great Britain against its people in a neighbouring colony, and a spirit of resistance, worthy of the English name, had manifested itself in all the principal towns, against the angry and injudicious measures of governors and military chiefs. Rights, con-

cessions, chartered interests, and personal freedom, were all trampled on by men who had more power than judgment, more passion than knowledge, and whose rashness and violence tore with unhallowed hands the brightest jewel from the imperial diadem. In short, the governor of Boston, in Massachusetts, determined to coerce the people, who only demanded justice; and not having a sufficient military force to effect his purpose, demanded reinforcements from Canada, and the Tenth and Fifty-ninth regiments were ordered to march with all possible celerity to his aid. Such of the officers as could speak the French language fluently and assist in organizing and instructing the militia, were retained for that purpose. Eustace was of this number. Corps were to be formed, the savage tribes to be armed, and measures taken to defend Canada from inva-

sion, and suppress any sympathies that might be openly manifested by the inhabitants in favour of their neighbours.

D'Argenteuil, as a concession made to his social position, rather than a mark of confidence in his attachment to the government, had been appointed to the command of the militia of his district, and De Courcy was ordered to repair to the town of St. Ann, to drill and prepare them for active service. His authority extended over the two Indian tribes that inhabited, as we have already remarked, the borders of the Lake of the Two Mountains.

Before his departure from Montreal, he received an intimation from the commander of the forces, that little dependence could be placed on the Baron D'Argenteuil; that he was known to be unfriendly to the British as-

cendancy in the Canadas; and that it was the intention of the government to leave him only a nominal power as colonel of the militia, relying on the zeal and loyalty of the officer stationed at St. Ann, to supersede him in case of need, according to the spirit of written instructions given for that purpose.

Eustace hesitated whether he ought to accept of any situation that might place him in a state of hostility towards his friend, the father of his beloved Matilda; but reflecting on the probable consequences of a refusal, he prepared to obey. If another were named, said he, the discretionary authority confided to him, might become vexatious, if not dangerous, to that happy and virtuous family; whereas, in my hands, it can only be employed for their benefit and protection. Besides, the spot where Matilda lives may become the the-

atre of war, and I shall be at hand to shield her from harm, or die in defending her. With a just appreciation of his duty to his king and country, he readily, as most lovers would have done in his place, reconciled his fidelity as a soldier with the benevolence of a friend.

His appearance at the castle greatly disconcerted the baron, his sister, and Bertinval. Even Matilda found herself ill at ease between two rivals, whose pretensions were not equally favoured by her family, and was delighted to learn that the object of her choice had an ostensible motive for residing near her and visiting her father in an official character. She had a fair excuse for treating him unceremoniously; and Madame De Belrose, seeing him "clothed in a little brief authority," felicitated herself on the choice the government had made.

Bertinval was haughty, sullen and jealous; silent and reserved at dinner, scarcely seeming to remember where he had met with Eustace. This was not unobserved by the latter, who determined to wait patiently for a suitable occasion to pay his impertinence with interest.

After dinner, Bertinval, with the intention of lessening De Courcy in the opinion of his family, introduced the town-major, Thornwood, into the conversation.

"Your old friend, captain, at whose house I had the honour of breakfasting in company with you, has made rather a sudden exit from Montreal."

"I did not know, sir," replied Eustace, "that I had any person whom I could call friend at Montreal; if you allude to Lieutenant Thornwood, I have reason to believe your own

intimacy with him has been of older date than any knowledge I have of him can reach. I was a few months in garrison with him in Ireland, and found him in Canada on my arrival. You, sir, he claims as an old and intimate companion, in honour of whom he gave the breakfast to which you refer."

"I dare say; the silly bavard boasts of his intimacy with the whole human race; I only judged from appearances that you and he were old friends; but I may be under a mistake."

"I must deem your error voluntary, sir," rejoined Eustace. "May I take the liberty to inquire upon what presumption you give me for a friend, a person of whom you speak with so little reverence?"

"I spoke without reflection, Captain De Courcy,—meant no offence; Thornwood told me you were old friends, and probably with as

little truth as he boasted of his intimacy with me."

"Thornwood has been but two years a military man, sir," retorted Eustace; "his early years were passed among gamblers; and his intimate friends are probably those whose habits led them into such company. — I have never played."

Bertinval turned pale, bit his lips, tried to compose his countenance; but it would not do; the mirror was held before him, and recollections that overpowered him rushed upon his mind. His emotion was noticed by every person present; and the baron, in order to give a new direction to the conversation, began to moralize:—"No man," said he, "is accountable for the society into which chance may cast him, as nothing is more common than to hear weak and mean people, boast of their

acquaintance with men of rank and honour. A woman of soiled reputation, would give half her fortune to draw to her house, or appear in public with, persons of established virtue and consideration; and in this they often succeed by false appearances, and the mask they assume to captivate those who too readily take people on trust. As to the boasting propensities of your town-major, it is a species of homage, gratuitously rendered to personal superiority, prompted, perhaps, by self-love and empiricism, in he who renders it."

"I have no reason," said Eustace, "to decline the intimacy which Mr. Bertinval has thought fit to attribute to my intercourse with Thornwood, who is, perhaps, 'more sinned against than sinning;' but I take exception to the presumption that in the same breath gives me a friend and detracts from his merit."

"I am sorry, Captain De Courcy," said Bertinval, "that any unguarded expression should displease you; I only intended to express my surprise at his sudden flight from a cabal, which, as a soldier, he ought to have put down."

"We cannot make an eagle of a daw," said Eustace; "every man's courage depends on his organization; and if we were to drive all the timid out of society, we should find its ranks much thinner than is generally supposed, since all men affect more courage than they possess, as women, in general, seek to pass for being weaker than they really shew themselves in moments of peril and suffering. It is a man's misfortune more than his fault, if he value life more than reputation, or if he be so blind as not to see more danger in flight than in resistance. Cowards are always get-

ting into scrapes, just because they are known to be cowards, and always finish by being killed, if they remain in the army."

"How do you account for men of weak nerves entering into a profession for which natural causes render them unfit?" said the baron. "You have just said that a great portion of society is timid; and yet every young man loves to be an officer."

"The army, my dear baron, is made up of the vanities of mankind; a fine uniform, a handsome epaulet, a title to go into good company, are the leading motives; else we should see more officers rise to distinction, and leave a great name. Of the immense mass of names that figure in the army list, how few become historical: this is from the penury of capacity for that noble profession. 'If,' said a great general, 'you do not place the military pro-

fession above all others, if you do not love it with passion, if you do not devour books and plans of war and stratagem with enthusiasm, if you do not dream of combats, and feel ashamed not to have been in them, you ought to quit a habit you only dishonour.' Such were the sentiments of Saxe, Marlborough and Eugene, who were born soldiers, as Homer and Milton were born poets."

Matilda listened with rapture to our young officer, in whose eyes the fire of victory beamed as he spoke of his profession. She saw Bertinval crouching beneath him, and retired to her apartment, convinced that her family must have perceived the distance between the two rival candidates. De Courcy took a turn in the garden; she saw him from her window, and soon joined him. He offered his arm, and they continued in deep conversation,

without reflecting that they were observed. They both felt that they had much to say to each other, and were too happy to think of any thing but the pleasure of meeting after so many months' separation.

It is said, that a wise man tête-à-tête with the object of his affection, is as much embarrassed as the most ordinary of mortals: so it was with Eustace; he knew not how to commence a conversation which he so much desired. From this state he was soon relieved by Matilda.

"I have many thanks to offer you," said the sweet girl, pressing his arm, "for the interest you have been so kind as to take in a matter that so nearly concerns my happiness."

"Had I presumed to flatter myself that your approbation would authorize me,—he paused for a moment—would authorize my

interference in an affair so delicate, I know not any bounds I could fix to the exercise of my zeal."

"Father Le Clerc has told you every thing that has occurred. He is, indeed, my only fast friend in these trying circumstances."

"Your *only friend*!" said Eustace.

"Well, he *was* my only friend, Captain De Courcy, until you became an auxiliary. From the first moment he knew my father's intention to bestow me on my cousin, that worthy and sensible man, without declaring himself openly, was unhappy at the prospect of an union which he thinks unsuitable on many accounts. He has not given me a word of counsel to lead me to disobey my father; but I know the state of his mind; I am convinced of his disinterestedness; and as I will not wed any person I dislike, I am resolved to go into a convent. My

father will give me, I am convinced, an ample pension, and his fortune will pass to his nephew. I assure you, I shall be happy to escape on such easy conditions."

"There may be circumstances," said Eustace, "that would change the baron's determination, without imposing on his daughter so great a sacrifice."

"I cannot conceive of any, Captain De Courcy; he has given his word to his dying sister; he has proclaimed it to all his acquaintances; he has set his heart upon the execution; and, with the principles and temper I know him to possess, he will never yield to any reasons that friends or foes could urge. Under this conviction, I have made up my mind. I possess, perhaps, a large share of family obstinacy. Upon any other point, I would not venture to rebel against paternal

authority. By a definitive retreat and separation from the world, I enable my father to execute the better half of his engagement, and that, I am convinced, will fully satisfy my cousin."

"I am convinced," said Eustace, "that you never will be driven to such extremities. Only permit me to second father Le Clerc, and our joint efforts will, in time, remove the evils that menace you."

Matilda, although sincerely and warmly attached to De Courcy, had not ventured to indulge her secret inclinations, to which she saw insuperable barriers. She admired his manly beauty; she was charmed with his conversation, at times animated and elegant, always instructive and profound. She preferred him to any man she had ever seen; but what touched her heart, was an austere melancholy

that gave its mild colours to all he said, and softened a character that nature had cast in a giant's mould. As she only sought in him a virtuous friend, whose opinions were in harmony with her own in the painful situation in which she was placed, she willingly accepted the proposition he made to second the efforts of father Le Clerc. She did not suspect that love lurked at the bottom of this sentiment; his wings were not yet grown, nor his shafts pointed; she, therefore, delivered herself to the influence of pure friendship, with a confidence natural to her youth and fearless disposition.

"Every thing you can do, Captain De Courcy," she said, "will give you a new title to my gratitude. You cannot have a better auxiliary than the wise and virtuous man who has had the care of my moral and religious

education; but I fear you will soon be called to other duties than the domestic concerns of your friends. Your pursuit of glory will lead you far from me and my troubles; and I shall be left to struggle alone against the importunities of my cousin, the obedience I owe to my father, and the condescension that is due to my aunt."

Eustace was deeply affected. "I am not," said he, "insensible to these difficulties; but I will surmount them. I do not, my amiable friend, think it necessary at this moment to explain how this may be accomplished; but rest assured, that whilst I live, you will find in me the respectful affection of a friend, and the devotedness of a brother. Even supposing that war may reach our frontier, some time must elapse before I shall be called into action. I shall employ the interval to a good

purpose, and trust to heaven for the success of my zeal in your service."

"You are, then, my sworn friend and faithful cavalier," said Matilda, smiling.

"UNTIL DEATH," said Eustace, with seriousness.

These last words sunk deep into her heart. They were uttered in a solemn tone; and, during the remainder of the evening, she repeated them a hundred times to herself.

The following morning De Courcy was closeted with her father during several hours. Matilda was curious to learn what this could mean, and she watched with an anxious spirit the issue, supposing it might relate to her marriage. During this state of suspense, her aunt came to engage her to walk out. She found her niece agitated, and teased her with the customary inquiries about sleep, digestion,

and exercise. The impatience of Matilda discovered itself in an exclamation of wonder, what Captain De Courcy could have to communicate during two hours to her father.

"Nothing, my dear, that concerns you, I'll warrant," said the good lady; and yet, reflecting on passed conversations, it is not impossible he may be asking permission to make his court to the heiress of D'Argenteuil: but he stands no chance of a patient hearing."

"And why not, my dear aunt? Since my cousin Bertinval has been encouraged by the approbation of my family, surely a man of the merit of Captain De Courcy ought not to despair of success."

"This is partiality with a vengeance, my niece."

"It is but justice, my dear aunt."

"Justice rendered by a judge who is partial, my good girl, is liable to appeal."

"The sentence is, nevertheless, irrevocable."

"Indeed!"

"UNTIL DEATH," said Matilda, who now heard the footsteps of her father and De Courcy leaving the study, and conversing together in apparent good humour.

This calmed Matilda for the moment, and she accepted her aunt's proposition, to walk out and breathe the free air in the park. At dinner, she learned the subject of the morning conference. De Courcy had been concerting with the baron the plan of organizing the militia of the district, and issuing orders for immediately assembling and arming the savage tribes that inhabited the borders of the lake. The Indian chiefs were to assemble on the morrow, and receive a communication from

the government. As the greater part of our readers may be unacquainted with the ceremonial that precedes a declaration of war among the savages, we shall relate it as briefly as possible in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

Four hundred Indian friends who hither hied
 Their Christian lords to aid against all foes,
 Assailed the fortress on the further side.
 With strong and practised hands their painted bows
 Incessantly and vigorously they plied.

ERCILLA'S *Araucana*.

Soon as the woods on shore look dim,
 We'll sing at St. Ann's our parting hymn.

MOORE.

A LARGE oak-tree stood in the middle of the plain in front of the castle of Argenteuil. If Indian tradition be correct, ten generations of the red-men had reposed beneath its shade, during the ardour of the summer sun. Its roots sunk deep into the earth, and its vast

foliage was supported by a trunk of many fathoms in circumference. It had an Indian name, expressive of its qualities and position, which, if father Le Clerc be still living, he will remember with pleasure, for he loved and admired MIS-GA-WE-GA-BA-WEET.

Around this well-planted oak, the Indians were wont to assemble and discuss matters of general polity, with a gravity and decorum worthy of the imitation of deliberative assemblies that call themselves civilized, but whose mob-like vociferation would induce a savage tribe to tie them hands and feet, and dip them in the waters of the lake, to teach them reason and order in debate.*

Here the old men sate in judgment, the young received initiation, war and peace were decreed. No treaty was deemed valid and

* Vide the journals of the French Chambre des Députés.

binding between the red-men of these tribes, that had not been ratified under the branches of this sacred tree.

No court of Common Pleas, or Oyer and Terminer, was ever better known to city attorneys, or big wigs that envelope little brains, than this "open court" to the Algonquin and Iroquois chiefs. Hither they repaired on the summons of Argenteuil, to listen to the "war-talk," to be held with the deputy of their "great father beyond the big lake." With this love of business, was mingled a certain aldermanic taste for eating; and the smell of flesh-pots was a necessary stimulant to good humour and good speaking: consequently, sheep and oxen were slain, cut into pieces and thrown into cauldrons of boiling water, to which was added a due proportion of Indian corn. The chiefs formed a circle, and sat with as much

gravity as the twelve judges, when a mooted point of law is under discussion; the young men and women busy themselves in distributing the mess in wooden vessels, which the children scamper away to devour, and when they have stayed their stomachs, return to witness the solemn debates.

Here are no toasts, no uproar, no calls for "another cheer" from any wigged sachem in second childhood. When pots and platters are removed, the men, according to age and rank, form in column to receive the messengers of state, headed by their interpreter, who repeats every sentence that is addressed to the assembly, in the language of the audience.

The Baron D'Argenteuil, in the full uniform of colonel of the Canadian Militia, which it would be uninteresting to describe, except to a "commander of the forces," who would

not probably find time to read a novel, issued from the castle, accompanied by Eustace.

On such occasions the ladies are never forgotten : Madame De Belrose had more than once assisted at reviews, and cited the example of the "*Grand Monarch*," who never failed to parade the dames of the Court in carriages or sedan-chairs in front of the army, that they might receive the homage of the general officers, and witness the attentions his majesty paid in public to the favourite of the hour.

The parties, in presence of the interpreter, received from the hands of Eustace the written manifest of the Governor General, which we copy literally, for the edification of young diplomatists :

" MY RED BRETHREN,

" Our great father, whose throne is surrounded by millions of warriors, sends me to his red children to announce the disobedience of his subjects in the sister colonies. They have been ungrateful for his bounties, and listened to evil spirits, called patriots. They received food and protection from their commorparent when they were young and feeble, and now that they are strong and able to hunt for their own sustenance, they refuse to obey the orders of their chiefs, and give up a portion of their substance to the great sachems, called bishops and tithing-men. They have seized upon the bales of blankets and beads that were destined for the Algonquins and Iroquois, and cast them into the great lake at a place called Boston. Your great father, knowing your wants, sends a fresh supply for your women

and children, notwithstanding the unnatural rebellion of those men, who, by depriving you of the fruits of his paternal bounty, have become your enemies.

“ Brethren, these evil men are arming and preparing to invade your hunting ground, while you slumber in ignorance and security. They have tasted blood and thirst for yours : therefore let the chain of peace be broken and the hatchet be brightened !

“ Call your young men to arms. Provisions of all kinds will be furnished to your people. Spare none of the white people who have raised the cry of war ; and for every scalp that shall be produced as a testimony of your valour, the Governor General will pay a sum of fifty dollars.”

This humane proclamation of the Governor

General being read, the chiefs returned a suitable reply, expressive of their readiness to take the field.

The chain of peace was buried, the hatchet dug from the foot of the great tree, and delivered to Eustace, as a pledge of obedience to his will.

The shout of havoc resounded through all the towns and villages of Canada, and the "dogs of war" let loose on men, women and children, who only contended for those rights which constituted the national pride and glory of Englishmen.

The Baron D'Argenteuil was, in his heart, opposed to those measures he was called upon to second with his personal influence and abet with his sword, and he felt profoundly the embarrassments of his position.

"What do the inhabitants of the colonies

demand?" he would say to Eustace; "they have chartered rights which have been violated; the remonstrances they have respectfully laid at the foot of the throne have been called sedition; their meetings to expostulate, are branded with the name of rebellion; and their resistance to oppression and the tyranny of governors and subalterns, is punished with death!

"The offspring of common ancestry, proud of a common origin, and heirs of ages of renown, achieved by wisdom, valour and virtue, cannot submit to be treated like slaves, and taxed and governed without being consulted. That honest indignation, which injustice provokes, is treated like an ignominious crime; and the very regiment to which you, my friend, belong, is now the instrument of the despotism of General Gage, who slays by hundreds the subjects

of the British crown, in the name of him who wears it. He destroys a people who call Englishmen brothers, and England by the endearing name of HOME ! Happy am I, that my duty only compels me to defend the soil of my ancestors."

" I respect your opinions," said De Courcy, and if I had the power to concede every thing the neighbouring states require, I should not hesitate to restore peace to the land, which a mistaken policy is about to convulse; but I am not permitted to deliberate; I am a soldier, a mere instrument in the hands of my government, and under no moral responsibility for the evils my agency may produce. You, my dear baron, are free to act and think independently of any control, and not bound to set your foot beyond the limits of your own territory. This, I am convinced, you will defend

like a man of honour, without waiting to examine whether the invader have an abstract claim to your sympathy. I seek a favourable opportunity to admonish you to be circumspect, and to impress upon your memory, that you are not classed among the friends of government. You hold a responsible situation; your conduct will be watched with jealousy, and your least words will be unfavourably visited by all the trouble and vexation power can inflict.

“ You may judge of the address of the governor to these savage tribes as you think fit, and infer from the spirit of it, whether you are likely to be treated with moderation, should any part of your conduct confirm the suspicions you have awakened.”

“ I am not in danger of being denounced, De Courcy, for my expressions, since you and

my nephew are my only auditors ; but should circumstances compel me to avow my opinions publicly, I would only consult my integrity and religion. Pending such an event, let us obey the orders we have received from head-quarters. To-morrow is the day when the inhabitants of St. Ann, engaged in the fur-trade, take their departure for the lakes and mountains of the north-west ; my family is accustomed to assist at the religious ceremony that always accompanies this farewell ; when it is over, we will commence military operations."

Our fair readers, when they envelope their delicate forms in a fur pelisse, little suspect whence it comes, how it is obtained, or upon what an extensive scale of destruction, peril, and individual privation, the commerce of peltry has been carried on for nearly half a century. It has had its beginning, its climax,

and is now, from natural causes, descending so rapidly, that a few years will witness its extinction, with the race that subsists upon it. Civilization has by degrees augmented the wants of the savage tribes; these no longer destroy animals to obtain food; a heedless and indiscriminate destruction can alone supply the number of skins necessary to remunerate the trader, who sells arms, ammunition, rum, and blankets, to the inhabitants of the forests of North America. There are now fewer dissensions than formerly between the Indian tribes: fewer victims of discord and ferocity to second the common law of nature in thinning their population; but hunger and alcohol, wage a more certain and destructive war than the hatchet and the scalping-knife.

Before European adventurers introduced among them the produce of manufactures, the

skins of animals killed in the chase were sufficient to cover them during the cold season, and their flesh furnished abundance of food ; but since the Indian has become acquainted with luxuries unknown to his ancestors, he kills to sell, not to subsist, and with the spirit of a poacher, has abandoned the practice of a huntsman. His winters are passed in collecting parcels of the skins of the beaver, the martin, the fox and the bear ; and the exchange of these for manufactured articles, takes place every year with the agents of the fur-company upon a very extensive scale. The great intrepôt of this commerce is at Montreal. At this city, ships arrive from England every year, laden with the cheapest and coarsest articles. These are made up into small square packages of a convenient size, each weighing about two hundred pounds. A

band of strong linen surrounding the forehead of the carrier, and attached to the upper corners of the package, leaves the hands free to carry a lance, a staff, or kitchen utensil. The number of packages corresponds with the crew of each canoe, less two, as two men are necessary to carry the boat when the navigation is interrupted by a water-fall or other obstacle. When this happens, the canoe is unloaded in a minute of the whole of its cargo, and vessel and merchandize are carried forward on the shoulders of the crew, until they are again launched into smooth water. The boat is propelled with short upright paddles, and the toil is rendered light by the song of the boatmen, of which the air corresponds to the stroke of the paddle. Those who have heard the "Canadian boat-song" of "the favourite minstrel of the Emerald Isle," can form a just notion of

the music that beguiles the way of these hardy and enterprising people. Rivers, lakes and brooks are their highway; and fatigue, danger and privation are familiar to them; they laugh and sing in the midst of tempests, and slumber, surrounded by bears and wolves, with that happy levity of character common to Frenchmen. They deposit their freight at the posts, established by the North-west company from one extreme point to the other of the North-west region of America. At every post, a clerk of the company receives such a quantity of merchandize as he can exchange for skins with the Indians, who have their summer residence in the vicinity, and with these he makes up the return cargo of the canoes, which arrive at Montreal in time to enable the servants of the company to assort and pack up the furs, and transmit them to

England by the vessels that generally sail from the St. Lawrence in the month of October.

The ermine of the judge's robe, the swan-down boa, that vies in whiteness and softness with the fair neck and shoulders it partly conceals, the bear-skin cap of the fierce granadier, are all derived from the source we have just described.

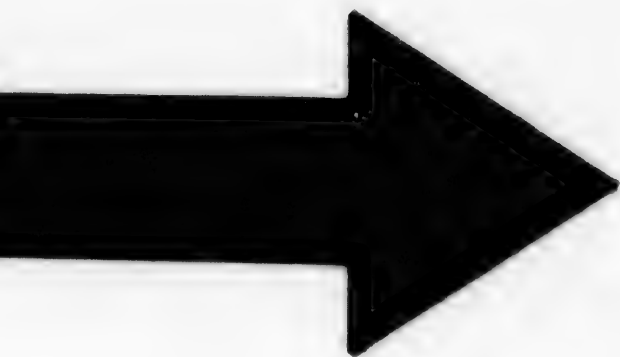
A novel that "talks of love," is not a suitable place to expatiate on the woe, misery, and acts of inhumanity, which have resulted from this traffic; it would be called the "*twaddle of sentiment*," and as we are of the irritable race of scribblers, we are not disposed to lend our flanks to the shafts of those who are "willing to wound."

There is in the "North-west Company" a regular hierarchy; and he who would become a member of that rich and powerful body, must rise by degrees from the solitary chief of

a log-hut in a remote quarter of the wilderness, where he spends some ten or fifteen years of an existence, as monotonous as that of a domestic carp in a gentleman's fish-pond. Sometimes he takes for a companion the daughter of an Indian chief, and at the expiration of his long and dreary probation, leaves her and her children, to return to a society whose language, usages and sympathies he has almost forgotten. He thus acquires a right to the principal or interest of a share valued at ten thousand pounds sterling, with which he generally retires to his native village in the highlands of Scotland.

The chief administrators of that great commercial establishment, are men of worth and honour, and renowned for hospitality. They had shewn every kind of amiable attention to Eustace and his brother officers at Montreal;





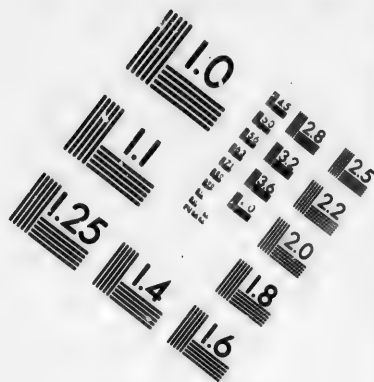
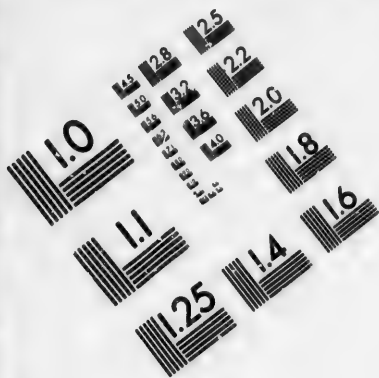
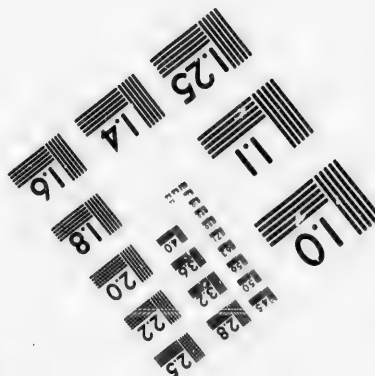
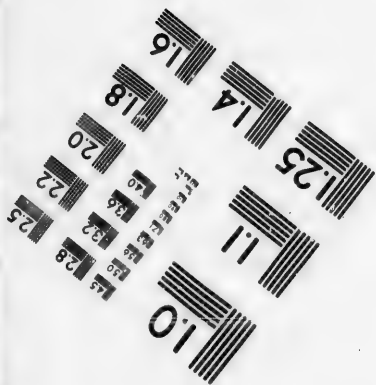
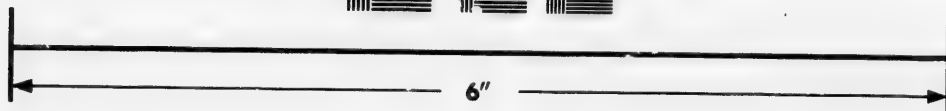
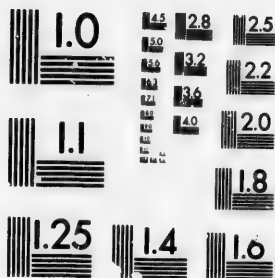


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and as they usually witness the departure of their little fleet for the wilds of the north-west, he willingly accepted the proposal of the Baron D'Argenteuil, to join them at St. Ann the following day.

The bark canoes were numerous, and the crews composed of a race of strong and hardy men, half savage, half civilized, accustomed to a life of danger and continual excitement, which, with all its privations has charms, unknown to "those who dwell in crowded cities pent." We have somewhere remarked, that the chapel of St. Ann was dedicated to the "Lady of Deliverance." In Catholic communities, the mother of the Redeemer is an object of adoration, upon whose intercession the pious rely for the accomplishment of their wishes, whether from a belief that there is more tenderness and compassion in the female

breast, or that Deity is too awful for humble mortals to approach, without the mediation of a being more nearly allied to humanity, we do not pretend to decide. To this divine person, the simple-hearted Canadians recommend their wives and children, during a long absence of their natural protectors, as well as the safety and prosperity of their own persons in the enterprize in which they embark. High mass is performed, and offerings made at the chapel of St. Ann the day the boatmen take leave of their families. Upon occasions like these, the man of observation may perceive the shades and tints, and analyze the character of human affections. The departure for a long voyage, or the return of a vessel after a long absence, furnishes an indifferent spectator with a happy opportunity of examining the various emotions of which sensibility is the common

source: we see the mother who loves her child, more agitated than the child who quits his parent; the affliction of two lovers who separate, is less poignant than their joy is excessive at meeting. The departure of the vessel occasions tears of regret, but the regret is mixed up with hope and confidence: her sails are spread; she moves slowly from the harbour, and is followed by looks of affection and sighs of sorrow, which diminish as her form fades in the distant horizon. But at the first signal of her arrival in port, all the parents and friends flock to the water's edge, with hope, fear and anxiety in their countenance. The emotions of a tender mother are easily distinguished from those of a young wife. The sensations of the lover are manifested by the colours of his physiognomy, which grow more lively and animated at the near approach

to the object beloved; cries of joy augment in proportion as they recognize each other more distinctly; arms are extended before they can touch: fear and anxiety are expressed on the features of her who has not yet discovered the being so long desired: she remains unmoved, as if she neither saw nor heard the tumult and bustle that is before her. The vessel touches the quay; friends and relations precipitate themselves into each others arms, and with hurried steps seek the domestic hearth, where fond recollections embellish every object, however simple and homely.

To scenes of hilarity and delight, succeed others of unutterable woe. The wife, whose children wait with filial affection to "share the envied kiss," learn that the father is not among the crew, but has fallen a victim to disease in a foreign land. The father who left

his family in health, and sees no trace of them among the busy crowd, flies to his untenanted dwelling, only to learn that death and misery had dispersed the little group, upon which his fancy had dwelt amidst the dashing of the waves and roaring of the tempest, from whose dangers he blessed heaven they were exempt. His bursting heart and fixed eye, looking towards the seat of ALL POWER, seem to reproach Providence with the peculiar severity of his fate.

To complete the picture, the poor, drooping, disconsolate widow, whose eldest boy, the only prop of her old age, had fallen overboard in a storm, sees with anguish the crowd passing away, the ship safely moored, and the deck silent. She seems absorbed in despair, and totters towards a solitary spot, where she may contemplate in silence the same vessel in which

her beloved child had departed from his native city, full of life, spirits and resolution.

Eustace had witnessed such scenes, and was interested in that which took place at the village of St. Ann. He assisted at the high mass; saw the crews depart; and when the boats were out of sight, the wives and children prostrated themselves before a large iron cross, to implore once more the protection of the Virgin for those who were dear to them. He was penetrated with sympathy, and could not but admit the utility of a custom, which lessened earthly inquietude, by awakening confidence in a power, whose protection is promised to those who seek it in sincerity of heart.

These people were all tenants of the Baron D'Argenteuil. He received their parting homage, and tranquillized them with a promise

that he would be the guardian of their interests until they were again united.

"These brave fellows," said Eustace, "will not soon sleep on beds of down."

"No," said the baron; "but they are so inured to hardships, so intrepid and gay withal, that the privation of the ordinary comforts of life, is to them a matter of indifference. They paddle their canoe from the earliest dawn of light, until night and fatigue invite them to repose; then moor them in safety, and retire under the shade of some lofty tree. They cut the driest wood they can find, make a large fire, form a circle around it, and after a meal of such food as would make one of your London aldermen dream of plague, pestilence and famine, sink into a sound and undisturbed sleep. A small iron pot contains a morning dram for every one of the party,

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which having swallowed, they continue their voyage with alacrity and cheerfulness. We have been assured by old boatmen that the iron pot is sometimes found empty in the morning by the first who visits it. Unable to account for the loss of the ration of rum which had been left in it, superstition attributed the theft to some evil genius of the forest, until after a light fall of snow, the print of a bear's feet was discovered up to the spot where the pot had been left, and from thence to a close cover, where bruin was found intoxicated, and paid with his skin the liberty he had taken with the liquor. However incredible this may seem to us, my friend," continued the baron, who perceived a gathering smile on the countenance of Eustace, "I have heard it so often asserted, that I can no longer doubt its authenticity."

"The mode of life you describe," said Eustace, "may be even agreeable in fine weather, but how support it in the severe winters of the rigorous climate to which they are bound?"

"They are alike indifferent to heat and cold," said the baron. "They live with less covering than Indians. Deep snows afford them shelter from the currents of cold wind. They have snow shoes, much resembling the rackets with which you play in England. With these they walk on the surface without sinking; and when they prepare for sleep, a large square or round place is soon cleared, and a barrier raised to a considerable height. They make a good fire, place their feet towards it, wrap themselves in a coarse blanket, and fear neither colds, coughs nor catarrhs."

"What admirable soldiers they would

make," said Eustace, "if their courage be equal to that of regular troops."

"They possess all the energy without the ferocity of the savages," said the baron.

"The battles that were lost when your countrymen invaded our shores, never resulted from want of spirit in the soldier; the commanders only were to blame, if blame be due to misfortune."

CHAPTER IX.

Give them a two hours' sermon, and let them howl a psalm, to a tune that is worse than the cries of a flogged hound, and the villains will lay on like threshers.

Pev. of the Peak.

'Tis his boast,
A daring soldier, for renown athirst,
In the most desperate perils to be first.

Ercilla.

Time passed agreeably at the castle of Argenteuil. Every day cemented the friendship of Eustace with that virtuous and respectable family. His love and admiration of Matilda increased with the opportunities he had of viewing her more narrowly. His was a first

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love, and partook of the ardour commonly attributed to that passion, when it invades the heart for the first time. She perceived by the tender attentions and silent testimonies of her lover, how much he was devoted to her; and they felt so happy in each other's society, that they little dreamed of the obstacles that were opposed to what had now become a mutual desire.

Matilda treated her cousin with more cordiality than he had been accustomed to receive from her before the arrival of De Courcy. This was perhaps intended as a sort of indemnity for the sentence she had pronounced upon his pretensions to her hand and fortune. But his vanity interpreted her kindness very differently; and he went so far as to assure her father, that her manner towards him had removed the apprehensions they had both con-

ceived. If occasionally any jealousy stole into his mind, in consequence of her attentions to Eustace, he fancied that his departure, which drew near, would dissipate any passing partiality she might entertain for him.

War was now raging in the colonies, and Eustace was occupied in accomplishing the purpose of his mission. The militia was armed and exercised, and the Indians ready at the first signal, to cross Lake Champlaine and ravage the new settlements that were forming on the frontiers of New York and Vermont.

Orders reached Eustace to march with all the force he had in readiness, to join an expedition that was to embark from the port of St. John, on the lake, for the purpose of making a landing on the opposite shore. Nothing was heard in the environs of the castle but war dances and savage yells, and the "dreadful

note of preparation" sounded through those peaceful woods.

While occupied in arranging the order of marching, Bellegarde appeared before Eustace in his war costume, and announced his intention to accompany him.

"You would then leave your mistress, my brave companion?" said Eustace.

"She no longer requires my services, captain; the chase has lost its charm for her; and any white menial can superintend her dogs and horses. It is time for Bellegarde to prove to his red brothers, that the blood of an Ontario chief flows in his veins;—besides, my mistress has commanded me to accompany you; and when the horn sounds to the chase, I am not to squat like a mongrel in a corner of the kennel. I am, as you know, sir, only an adopted child of this tribe; and I am resolved

to seek in the chance of war, that made me their captive, the only title I have to become their leader on some future occasion."

"Thou shalt soon be a leader, Bellegarde, if, on consulting thy fair mistress, I find her disposed to part with thee; and happy shall I be to have a companion to share my fate, whose noble spirit I have admired in a more perilous situation than any in which we are likely to be placed."

The following morning, as Eustace was about to ride to St. Ann, to inspect a detached party of troops, Matilda proposed to accompany him, having an annual visit to pay to the Grey Sisters of the convent, whose stock of medicine she renewed out of funds that her father placed at her disposal for the relief of the sick and distressed.

On their way, Eustace demanded whether she sanctioned the project of Bellegarde.

"I have more than sanctioned it," said Matilda; "I have urged it. Knowing that his attachment to me imposed many restraints on his natural inclination to distinguish himself, I relieved him from all embarrassment by suggesting the advantage of serving under your orders, and availing himself of your regard for him. He is no longer a boy; and he holds himself to be of no ordinary mould. His acknowledged superiority over his companions, and the deference paid to it, are sufficient to inspire him with other wishes than that of dependance on me. We have all remarked that his desires and tastes are far above the condition in which destiny has placed him, and in a very short time he would cease to be a commodious inmate of our house. My father, at my request, has made a suitable provision for his future support; and should he prefer living on

our estate, to the vain title of a savage chief, I shall always have an opportunity of rewarding his zeal and attachment."

"I cannot, my dear friend," said Eustace, "but approve of your kind solicitude for this noble young man; but if my wishes might be listened to, he would remain near your person. In a short time, war, with all its calamities, may reach Canada, and there is no calculating the value of so valiant and faithful a partisan. It is a power you might dispose of on any unforeseen emergency; and to render it more efficient, and give him due authority over the people of his tribe that remain in the vicinity, I will invest him with a military title, and leave him with a sufficient number of men to form a guard over the house and possessions of D'Argenteuil."

"Your high opinion of Bellegarde, Captain

De Courcy, is an additional motive for adhering to my plan. I am not exposed to any immediate danger. The whole population is devoted to my family; the ravages of war are far from our dwelling; you, on the contrary," said she in a low voice, while a tear glistened in her bright eye,—“you are going to seek peril and glory; you may find Bellegarde useful in the hour of danger; and perhaps I may owe to his intelligence and intrepidity, the life of my dearest friend. I would not utter a word that could arrest you in the career of honour, which it is alike your duty and inclination to pursue; but it is impossible for me to be insensible to the danger with which your path is beset, or exempt from the apprehension, that we part never again to meet.” Tears choked her voice; and as her last words were uttered as she approached the large iron cross, where

the wives and children of the Canadian boatmen pray for the safety of their husbands and fathers, the pious girl alighted from her horse, and kneeled before the image of the Virgin, to implore her protection for her lover.

De Courcy's heart was penetrated with all the tender and elevated feeling such a scene was so well calculated to inspire. He could not find language strong enough to express his love, gratitude and admiration of the angelic being in whose presence he stood. He bent his knee on the pedestal of the cross, and vowed to devote his life to her. He raised his noble front towards heaven, and besought the ALL-POWERFUL to witness and sanction the homage he paid to virtue and affection. "Accept," said he, "divine Matilda, the first offering of a heart that, until this moment, has never vibrated to any touch but that of filial

affection. Let God and angels bear testimony to its purity. From this moment I am thy friend, brother, husband, as it please Providence and thee to order."

"Take my faith in return," said Matilda, calmly and resolutely, giving him her hand, which he pressed to his lips, and perceived for the first time on her wrist a bracelet, on which was embroidered the last word he had spoken a few days before, when their walk in the park was finished—"UNTIL DEATH."

After this solemn pledge, this holy league and covenant, the two lovers pursued their way towards the village, silently meditating on the serious engagement into which they seemed to have been led by an invisible power; and although clouds and darkness hung over its final consummation, they were both happy.

On their return towards the castle, their souls were in a state of repose; and they spoke of future troubles and difficulties with the resignation of people who are satisfied with their present condition.

“I will never marry you, De Courcy,” said Matilda, “without the consent of my father; nor will I afflict him by any extraordinary efforts to wring that consent from him. I know the full extent of my duty towards him; and cost what pangs it may, I shall discharge it as a condition inseparable from my existence and self-respect. I am not certain he will persist in his project to bestow me on Bertinval.—Bestow me!” she repeated with emphasis;—“yes, my fortune is under his control,—my hand and heart even now are no longer my own; they belong to thee, dear Eustace, and are safe in my keeping, until it shall please

heaven to remove the obstacles that stand in the way of our union.—‘Go where glory calls thee;’ and if in thy bright career thou art destined to quit this earthly scene, my spirit will seek thine. Trust to the word of Matilda.”

Those, and only those, who have known the soft influence of virtuous love, can duly appreciate the satisfaction of these two interesting beings. Their approaching separation was a sad and painful subject to dwell upon; but being inevitable, they resigned themselves without murmuring. Matilda, especially, was careful not to cast a chill upon the ardour of De Courcy, by a word that might lead him to suppose she regretted the necessity of submitting to the privations imposed upon her by his profession. Tears and sighs were as unbecoming as they were far from the thoughts of the be-

trothed of a soldier. The baron loved De Courcy, and his society was so full of charms, that although he might at times apprehend his longer stay in the country would be an obstacle to the accomplishment of his favourite project, he could not view his departure without regret.

Madame De Belrose lamented that her nephew was not so fine a fellow as Eustace, although she deemed this nephew quite good enough for a husband, provided he would never be jealous of the attentions more agreeable men might render to his wife.

The only person who sympathized with the two lovers was the good chaplain. He was a learned, simple-hearted, and virtuous man; and would have preferred a peasant of unexceptionable morals, as the husband of his beloved pupil, to a prince of vicious and disor-

derly habits. In all his opinions he had the pertinacity of the Vicar of Wakefield, and for this reason was seldom consulted by the baron. He had conceived a warm friendship for Eustace, from the moment Matilda was an object of the young officer's solicitude.

The following morning the brave youth issued from the castle-gates at an early hour, as much to avoid the tenderness of a farewell, as the exposure of his emotion at a separation from Matilda.

He left with Bellegarde a letter for the baron, in which was enclosed the nomination of the young Indian chief to the command of the party of the Algonquins, that had been ordered to join the regular troops at the rendezvous.

At the appointed time Eustace arrived at St. John's harbour, where preparations were

on foot to cross Lake Champlaine, and attack a strong post the Americans had formed on the borders of Burlington Bay.

We need scarcely remind our readers of the truth of that proverb which says, that "those who go away are less to be pitied than those who remain behind." The exhilarating motion of a carriage,—the excitement of the air through which they pass rapidly,—the variety of the scenery, that seems to change at every turn of the wheel, have a strong influence on the mind, and dissipate by degrees the one absorbing regret, that seizes upon the being who retires to solitude to dwell upon the loss of a friend. Man can do two things at a time, —he can love and fight: woman, on the contrary, gives herself entirely up to that servitude which is the affair of her whole life. Thus, while Eustace pushed forward, resigned

and resolute, Matilda retired to her chamber, where all her energy could scarcely give her an outward shew of composure. She sent for her faithful Bellegarde, asked him a thousand questions about the orders he had received, and the mode in which he intended to prove to De Courcy, his gratitude for having raised him to distinction among his brethren.

“ I shall find means,” said the proud Indian, “ of shewing that I am his friend: as his head is not so hard that the tomahawk of the enemy cannot enter it, I will be his shield in battle and his guard at night, when the adder steals through the long grass to sting those who slumber. The rank he has given me I had already received from the unanimous suffrage of my companions, without which, any commission from the white-men would be only a vain empty title. It would give me autho-

ity to order without the power to compel obedience. But, dear mistress, I know your anxiety about this stranger; and to Bellegarde the consciousness of serving you, of doing any thing that can contribute to make you happy, will excite more vigilance and urge to higher deeds, than all the marks of distinction the king himself could bestow. I call the Great Spirit to witness, that no selfish motive stirs within me."

"You cannot render me better service, kind Bellegarde, nor one for which I could be more grateful, than to second and watch over Captain De Courcy. I place his safety in your hands; and recollect, that it is more important to me than my own existence. Adieu! be secret as thou art faithful."

Bellegarde was delighted to quit the castle. He saw that his mistress had a greater favour-

ite than he himself could hope to be ; and although his reason could not blame her, his heart was not the less agitated and sore. He looked with wounded pride at the colour of his skin, and was enraged at the degraded state of his nation. His life was a burden he was desirous to cast away in some action, that might excite admiration and envy. His condition forbade him to raise his eyes towards Matilda with any other sentiment than that of respect and humility ; but this consideration could not shield him from the soft influence that had stolen insensibly into his heart and irritated him to madness and despair. He left her with the resolution to render himself worthy of her esteem if he lived, of her regret if he should perish. He collected his chosen band, and went forth full of that happy confidence that courage and inexperience inspire. In two

days he joined De Courcy. The noise and tumult of a camp, and the "pomp and circumstance of glorious war," were all in harmony with the spirit that animated him. He looked on the regular movement of the British soldiers with a sort of contempt natural to the Indian, who makes war like the tiger, and crouches nearest to the earth when he is about to spring upon his prey. The first orders he received were to place his company at a considerable distance from the camp, on the border of the lake, and prevent any spies from the opposite shore from coming near enough to observe the preparations that were making for an attack. He soon had an opportunity of proving his fitness for the trust reposed in him. He took a position where, concealed from those that might cross the lake, he could perceive any movement they might make.

With his ear constantly on the ground, and his eyes open while his companions slept, he heard towards morning the sound of oars on the water, and soon perceived a boat making towards the spot where he was posted. He ordered his followers to retire into the close cover of the wood, and wait until the enemy landed. The reconnoitring party landed and secured their boat, then proceeded cautiously towards the British camp. When they had removed to a distance of several hundred paces from the spot where they had landed, Bellegarde crept towards the boat, which he cut adrift and pushed into the lake, until it was in deep water. He then swam ashore, raised the war-whoop, which was repeated by his companions, and as the Americans returned with precipitation towards the place where they had left their boat, they were sur-

rounded and taken without resistance. They were ten in number; and the humanity that Bellegarde had been taught at the missionary school of St. Ann, saved them from the scalping knife of his party. He disarmed the prisoners, bound their hands, and sent them with a sufficient escort to the quarters of De Courcy. Bellegarde remained at his post until sent for by the general who commanded the expedition, who, in presence of Eustace, made the young chief a present of a sword of honour and an officer's sash, to distinguish the rank he held among the Indians.

From the prisoners the general learned, that a considerable force was gathered on the opposite side of the Lake Champlaine, to make a descent on the British lines, and if possible fall upon them, unaware as they were presumed to be of any attack.

The regular forces collected at the village of

St. John amounted to fourteen hundred, exclusive of detachments from the Indian tribes. These were embarked in boats and escorted by two small armed vessels. The Americans, who perceived from the high grounds that surround the bay of Burlington, the enemy approaching, took up a strong position, and determined to repel the invaders of their soil and their liberties. They were composed of men unacquainted with war, but bold, intelligent and enterprising. They were commanded by officers elected by ballot, not on account of skill in military tactics, but in consequence of their personal merit and zeal in the common cause. There is something so simple and touching in the language of these early heroes of American liberty, that their addresses to their fellow citizens will not be superfluous in an historical romance.

The Americans were commanded by a man

whose name figures honourably in the pages of what is called, by way of distinction, "The Revolutionary war." We shall have occasion to speak of him in another place. To Colonel Roberdeau the chief direction of these citizen soldiers was confided; and he placed them by battalions in the best positions, for the defence of the place against which the assault was made; not so much in the hope of beating regular troops and experienced commanders in a pitched battle, as to destroy them in detail in their progress through the country. The deacons of the different parishes, like the divines of the Scottish puritans, accompanied their brethren to the field, in order to augment their zeal and inflame their courage. Before the British troops arrived within reach of their shot, they distinctly heard their united voices repeating a psalm, well known in those parts

to the old members of the presbyterian church.

“ Why, ye wretched sinners, why
Will ye lose your souls and die ?
God, your Saviour, asks ye, why
Will ye lose your souls and die.”

When the hymn, composed of seventeen stanzas, was finished, a sermon was preached, composed for the occasion by brother Thankful Ticknor, from the following text: “ But do thou to them as unto the Medianites ; unto Sisera ; and unto Jabon at the brook of Kison ; who perished at Endor and became as the dung of the earth.”

The good man had written his sermon ; but having lost his spectacles could not read a line of it, and was, unfortunately for his hearers, obliged to trust to his memory. Sinful pride, as he often acknowledged afterwards, did not permit him to call in the sharper sight of a

brother deacon to his aid. He consoled himself, nevertheless, with the reflection, that the enemy was so near at hand when divine service commenced, that there would not have been sufficient time to pour into the hearts of his flock, all the instruction he had with so much care and painstaking prepared for them. This sermon, of which we preserve the original manuscript as a literary curiosity, was divided into four distinct heads, each head into four distinct divisions, and each division into four subdivisions, with a peroration of a suitable length, in which the discourse was summed up and repeated in an abridged form, in order that no part of it should slip out of the memory of the auditors.

The order of the day distributed to the sergeants, and read at the head of every company, is of a different composition.

"My brave friends and fellow citizens," said Colonel Roberdeau, "for some time past Providence has exposed our patience to rude trials, in order to render us more worthy of that liberty, which his goodness bestowed upon our fathers, and of which wicked tyrants seek to deprive us. To preserve this invaluable blessing, we have left our families, our industry, our home, to run the chances of war against regular troops, commanded by skilful officers. What is deficient in our organization and knowledge, we must supply by courage and perseverance ; every man must fight, as if the success of the day depended on his personal efforts, and must feel himself responsible towards his country, his children and friends, for any disaster that may result from an imperfect or unfaithful discharge of his duty as a citizen soldier."

“ As you have chosen me to command you, I ought to explain to you what I deem necessary to our common interest. Recollect, that this dreadful crisis was reserved for the age in which we live : it is our destiny, a condition attached to our existence, from which there is no escaping. I praise God that I live to participate in the dangers and perils to which my country is exposed ; for what inheritance can we leave to our children comparable to liberty and peace ?

“ I must not conceal from you, my fellow citizens, that this novel existence demands great sacrifices ; not of our lives, for these are in the hands of Providence, and their period is marked, whether in war or in peace ; but of our habits and daily comforts. The sword of the warrior is more difficult to wield than the instrument of the cultivator : hunger, thirst,

fatigue, privations, are the companions of the soldier; and if he murmur at their presence, he is unfit for his task; let him cast away arms he would only dishonour.

“Now if there be a man among you insensible to the precious advantages that a great effort of courage and virtue will procure; if there be one who would deprive his country or his family of such service as is essential to their well-being; in short, if there be one who would shrink from so brilliant an opportunity of proving his zeal and patriotism, I beg him, in the name of our common safety, to retire from our ranks; his presence can only be fatal to our cause; it is like blight and mildew among good grain.

“I have sometimes heard the discouraging words ‘let us return to our homes and take care of our wives and children:’ but will the

enemy not follow you? will he not plunder, tax, and persecute you, when disunion shall have deprived you of the power to resist? Look at the opposite shore—the horde that covers it ready to fall upon us, receives each one sixpence a day; they stake their lives for a morsel of bread! shall we then—we who defend our farms, our families, our laws, and independence, shrink from a combat with machines that move without a soul, without a motive, without a sentiment, but cold, passive obedience to impel them; the scum of society, the dregs of prisons, who have no option but misery and death, or the service in which they are enlisted? Shall we yield to creatures like these, who fight for the worst possible cause? No, my friends, the God of our fathers, who conducted them into this land of promise, will deliver our enemies into our hands, if we shew

ourselves worthy of his protection. Let us ask for his aid; and whether we live or die our lot will be glorious."

When the different companies were placed in the order of battle, and the British troops were entering the bay, the village preachers placed themselves by the side of the several commanding officers, a drawn sword in one hand, and a psalm book in the other. Here they continued singing and exhorting their brethren to remember the captivity of the children of Israel, their patience, long suffering, and the divine interposition in their favour. Many of these pious men were the descendants of the Poundtexts, the Kettle Drumles and Langcales, whose zeal in the "*good cause*," has been recorded by the greatest genius of the age, in the most amusing pages that ever issued from the press. These men

were not less zealous than their immortal ancestors, in calling down the vengeance of heaven upon the British troops and their leaders, whom they compared to the Moabites and Philistines, clothed in fine linen and scarlet, and coming to devour the elect of the Lord. While their loud voices called upon their followers to kill and hew down with the edge of the sword; the commanders of regiments held a council of war, to decide whether they should wait the attack of the English in the positions they had taken, or descend to the water's edge, and dispute the landing. Ethan Allan, Ephraim Stone, Thankful Gallop, and Ebenezer Pennyman, all hardy buck-hunters and fanatical "preachers of the word," opined for a fight in the shallow water, declaring that the waters would swallow up the host of Pharaoh, and that "hell would be paved with the

souls of the unregenerated" children of despotism. The commander-in-chief, Roberdeau, judged it more expedient to let the enemy land, and attack them on the beach before they could form into regular bodies. "Our people," said he, "are brave, strong and intelligent; yet as their ears are unaccustomed to the noise of battle, and their hands unstained with human blood, they must become familiar with the work of destruction, before they can cope with regular troops. We may lose the first, the second, the tenth battle, but we must not, on that account, deem our cause in danger. We shall still be victorious, if we persevere. Let us thin the ranks of our enemies, harass, fatigue, and wear them out by continual attacks and surprises. Let us destroy them in detail, by drawing them into the interior country, where neither artillery nor

cavalry can be brought into action. We shall then be on a footing of equality with them, and reduce the whole system to a series of partial combats. Every day will exhaust their strength and add to ours; every tree for us is a fortress; recruits will daily join us; on all sides we shall assail them, and in such a country as ours, the best army cannot long be preserved from destruction. The Swedes taught the peasants of Russia the art of war, until the vanquished became conquerors. War is not a science made up of positive rules; he is the best general who judges with the greatest discernment the circumstances in which he is placed, and turns them to his advantage. We will fight the British troops in our own way, instead of leaving them masters of time and place. We will resist just long enough to do them all possible harm, without exposing our

raw and undisciplined soldiers to the danger of a complete defeat, and the discouragement that would inevitably follow. In this mode of warfare, our people will soon lose that dread of regular troops, which they have been accustomed to entertain at their peaceful fire-sides ; and what we gain in confidence the enemy will lose."

This wise and prudent system was not appreciated by the council; the zeal and enthusiasm of the puritan leaders, were not accessible to the voice of reason ; their hope of success was founded on their faith in the immediate aid of " the God of Battles ;" and although the brave Roberdeau insinuated that Deity never condescended to command a cohort, but left men to the exercise of their own reason and will, it was resolved to give a general battle. He was admonished to cast away human

reason as filthy rags, to gird up his loins like a man, to buckle on the sword of Gideon, and sound the trumpet of Joshua. Roberdeau finding that he could not obtain the suffrages of the council, shewed his secret orders from General Lincoln, which directed him to "allure the enemy by partial engagements and skilful retreats into the country; to retire towards Tyconderoga."

"And now, my brethren," said he, "you will follow the plan I have communicated; and I will shew you this day, how I understood its execution."

The chiefs had scarce time to reach their destined posts, when the British troops entered the bay, and the artillery from the vessels poured vollies of grape-shot upon the beach, in order to cover the landing of the boats with the infantry. The Americans oc-

cupied the high grounds, and kept up a well-directed fire on the assailants; and as they were good marksmen, a considerable number of the British officers and men were killed and wounded, before the whole force could be formed on the beach. De Courcy commanded the first division of boats, and suffered much from a body of militia and riflemen that had thrown up a breast-work on a point that commanded the entrance of the harbour. Seeing his men fall around him, as soon as the boats were near the land he leaped into the water, and as his division followed his example, they soon formed, and advanced towards the position from whence so destructive a fire was pouring upon them. Although his force was already much weakened by the number of killed and wounded, he marched rapidly to the assault, in the hope of dislodging the

enemy from a position of so much importance. He had already received a wound in his shoulder from a rifle ball, and several had passed through his hat at the same time. Bellegarde, with his company of Indians, was on board of one of the large vessels yet far from land, and watching with anxiety the movements of Eustace. The eagle eye of the young chief soon perceived the intention of his friend, and the danger to which he was exposed; so, without waiting for orders, he gave a shout as a signal to his companions to follow him; and they all leaped into the lake, and swam to a place where they could attack in flank the position that Eustace assailed in front. This was defended by Roberdeau in person; and but for the spontaneous movement of Bellegarde, would have cost Eustace and his party their lives, although that party was composed of

the flank companies of the well-known regiment of Frasier. These mounted the painful and slippery ascent, holding on such branches and shrubs as were scattered on its surface, until they reached the top, where a dreadful conflict commenced, man to man, fighting with the fury of enraged lions. As Eustace had scarce fifty men remaining unwounded, he found himself engaged with a great superiority of numbers; and must soon have perished, had not the terrific war-whoop of the savages, led on by Bellegarde, drawn off the Americans to the defence of their rear, which was assailed with an impetuosity that could only be successfully resisted by old disciplined troops. This critical moment was decisive. Eustace, faint from loss of blood, but inspired with new hopes of succeeding in his enterprise, employed all his energy, and being well

seconded by the few brave men he commanded, drove the Americans from their position. These left a great number of wounded, who were unable to escape, and (as is customary with the savages), instead of pursuing the flying enemy, drew their scalping knives to secure as many trophies of victory as possible among the dead and wounded men that remained on the ground. Whoever has assisted at a stag-hunt in France, and seen the "*couteau de chasse*" plunged into the neck of the victim, and the voracious avidity of the hounds, can form a tolerable notion of the butchery that takes place on a field of battle where victory remains to the Indians of North America! The detail would be too revolting to the heart the most hardened to the common sensibilities of our nature, and would deform rather than embellish our narrative. Eustace

and Bellegarde threw themselves between the savages and their victims; and the former, at the peril of his life, employed the little strength that remained to him defending with his sword the fallen enemy, and even wounding their assailants. Some few that escaped, and afterwards joined their friends, were filled with gratitude and admiration at the heroic efforts of this gallant officer, himself covered with wounds, and nearly exhausted with loss of blood and fatigue. Among these was Colonel Roberdeau; who, though severely wounded, was the last to abandon his post, and rally the flying militia, who sought refuge in the surrounding woods. The possession of this post enabled the whole body of the English to land, and drive the Americans from the lines they had gallantly defended against a superior number of chosen troops. A few such victo-

ries (as Rober' eau had predicted) could not fail to insure the tranquillity of the inhabitants of the surrounding country; the loss to the British being nearly a third part of the troops employed in the expedition. This unexpected resistance, and its natural results, left the British masters of the field of battle, but greatly diminished their confidence, and admonished them not to advance a step farther until a more imposing force should come to their aid.

We have shewn that the intrepid conduct of Eustace, and the prompt and energetic movement of Bellegarde decided this obstinate conflict, for which the general, who had stood all the while on the deck of one of the vessels, like a drill sergeant, in a theatrical attitude, obtained all the credit in the official account that was published of the battle. The more

effectually to conceal the merit of the party to whom all the merit belonged, Eustace and Bellegarde were reprimanded ; the one for having swam ashore and acted without specific orders, and the other for having prevented the Indians from executing the orders of the governor, " to scalp all the white people who might fall into their hands."* The answer of Eustace to the commander of the expedition was, in all respects, worthy of his noble and independent character.

" I am," said he, haughtily, " a soldier, not an assassin. If I have transgressed the laws of honourable war, it is the business of a court-martial to pronounce upon my conduct. I know of no law that dispenses with the common rights of humanity; but if there be such

* See "Essais Historiques et Politiques sur les Anglo-Américains." Par Auberteuil.

in our code, I shall never be the vile instrument any authority may employ to slaughter the dying or insult the dead. What my personal honour forbids, no orders shall compel me to execute."

The general, though irritated at this reply, was too shrewd a politician to take De Courcy at his word, and submit the alleged disobedience to a tribunal that might attribute to his actions the success of the enterprize, instead of leaving the laurels to be gathered by himself. But although the affair was left to slumber, it was not forgotten. As to Bellegarde, he never gave a second thought to the feigned displeasure of the general: he loved Eustace; he sought his esteem, and the approbation of his mistress. Besides, his mind was inflamed with the stories he had heard of one of his

family
quins,
heroes
chapt

family who had been the terror of the Algonquins, of whose exploits, equal to those of the heroes of fiction, we shall speak in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

This is no world
 To play with mamnets, and to tilt with lips:
 We must have bloody noses and crack'd crowns.

SHAKESPEARE.

IN a very rare work, published some seventy years ago, we find an example, which shews in a strong light the capacity and daring spirit of one of the family of Bellegarde. We take leave to refer to it for the sake of illustrating the character of that people, so little known, and so much despised and neglected by European philanthropists:—

An Indian named Piarsket, whose nation

was at war with the savages of the five nations, set out with four of his people in a canoe to descend the St. Lawrence in quest of adventures. Near the spot where Sorel River pours her tributary stream, he met with five canoes, filled with his enemies. Piarsket affected extreme surprise; and to induce the hostile party to believe that he had abandoned himself to despair, and was about to surrender at discretion, he sung the death song. He had previously to setting out loaded twelve musquets, with two bullets in each, held together by a small chain ten inches in length. The five hostile canoes approached to seize that in which Piarsket and his companions were apparently waiting to surrender themselves, when these suddenly fired and tore to pieces the frail birch-bark vessels. The men of the five nations were so surprised that they threw

themselves into the water, and gave Piarsket and his companions an opportunity of knocking as many of them as they pleased on the head. Some they reserved to glut the vengeance of the women and children of the tribe, who caused them to be tortured with all the cruelty savage ingenuity could devise. This exploit only gave a keener edge to the ferocity of this well-known chief.

He was well acquainted with the country of the five nations, and set out while the snow was yet on the ground, taking the precaution to put the hinder part of his snow shoes forward, in order that any one seeing his track, might think he had taken an opposite direction. When he came near one of the villages of his enemies, he hid himself till night, and then entered a cabin where the family was fast asleep, murdered them all, and carried their scalps to his lurking place. The next day

the people of the village searched in vain for the murderer. The following night he performed the same tragedy in another cabin. A second search for the author of so much calamity was equally fruitless; but the third night, a watch was kept in every house. Piarsket bundled up his scalps as so many testimonials of his success, and then stole privately to the first cabin, at the entrance of the village, where an Indian kept watch; he darted at him with the rapidity of a hawk, struck his dagger into his body, and fled shouting victory, well knowing that none of the Indians was swift enough of foot to overtake him. He let his pursuers come near him from time to time; and when they were exhausted and could no longer follow, sat down within sight of them to repose himself. Finding they did not attempt to follow him farther, he affected to take advantage of their weariness

ness and escape; but judging that they would not be apprehensive of farther danger from a man who fled from them, and that extreme fatigue would bring on a profound sleep, he returned to the spot where they reposed, killed them all, and added their scalps to those he had carried off from the village.*

With such a model of Indian chivalry in his own family, Bellegarde was far from attaching the least importance to the part he had taken in the late combat. He aspired to equal, if not surpass, any of his ancestors, and smiled with an air of contempt at the praise of his valour, which the general could not help mixing in his censure of his departure from military etiquette. This chief knows little of our customs, said he to Eustace, if he expect Indians to move like machines, only when they

* History of the Five Nations of Canada. Lond. ed. 1755.

are touched by the finger of the director.—
The commands of my mistress *avant tout*.

The Americans rallied at a short distance from Burlington Bay. With the exception of the party opposed to De Courcy and commanded by Roberdeau, they had suffered little loss. This brave and sagacious commander had received three wounds, yet was he satisfied at the result of the action. His raw militia had stood more firmly than he expected, and he entertained hopes which the sequel justified, that the moral and physical superiority of hardy and well-fed cultivators, fighting for their independence over mercenary troops, would in a short time fix victory on his side. On counting his regiments, he found only sixty missing. Another defeat, my brave companions, like this, and the Lord will deliver our enemies into our hands. The loss of the as-

sailants was above three hundred. It was what the countrymen of Eustace called "*gaining a loss*;" and yet the Gazettes blazed with columns of triumph; the bells of London rung it into the ears of the citizens, and the general was deemed a second Churchill, and raised to the "hospital of incurables," as a reward for his glorious services! This famous expedition, which was to crush rebellion in the states of New York and New Hampshire, moved on towards Crown Point, harcelled by the Americans, diminished by sickness and fatigue, and then—returned to winter in the quarters from whence it had issued.

Eustace, whose presence at the seat of the colonial government, might have excited the jealousy of the commander of the expedition, in which this young officer and his Indian friend had acted a conspicuous part, was left at a miser-

able village on the borders of Lake Champlaine, to command some fifty men, and report the movements he might observe on the part of the Americans. The Indians, with the exception of Bellegarde, returned to the Lake of the Two Mountains. This faithful partisan refused to leave Eustace in this cheerless solitude. He watched over him, dressed his wounds, and gave him unremitted proofs of attachment and devotedness.

By one of the Indians, Eustace wrote to his friend Father Le Clerc, inclosing a letter for Matilda, and requesting the good priest to send a special messenger with an account of every event that had occurred at the castle of D'Argenteuil during his absence. Although the distance was not great, and opportunities of communicating by the post-office very fre-

quent, Eustace remained without any news from the castle.

Winter had commenced, and to an European, habituated to the ordinary comforts of society, is painful and dreary. To add to the uncomfortable circumstances in which Eustace was placed, he felt that the government had treated him with injustice, by leaving him in a situation where the common necessities of life could not be obtained, and the public service might be performed by a sergeant's guard. He had not a sufficient force to repel an attack, if such an event might reasonably be looked for, at so inclement a season. It seemed as if a jealous and malignant power had marked him out for a victim, only because he had claims for a share at least of those testimonies of public favour, which had been bestowed on the general with much unmerited prodigality.

He sought, by creating amusement for himself, to vary the tedious monotony of his solitude. Bellegarde taught him the Indian method of fishing in winter. They broke the ice, and when night came on held pitch pine-wood lighted over the holes, to which the fish came in swarms, and were taken with a common landing net in great quantities. They hunted the deer, and killed a sufficient number of wild ducks and geese to supply their table. But his patience was exhausted; and this merely animal existence without food for the mind or affections, became insupportable. His letters by the post remained, like that he had sent by the Indian, unanswered; and resolved to make himself acquainted with the cause, he wrote to Matilda; he painted the anxiety occasioned by the ignorance in which he remained of her and her family in glowing colours; and to

make assurance that his letter would reach her doubly sure, he prevailed on Bellegarde to be the bearer of it. This devoted friend readily complied with the wishes of his companion in the dangers of flood and field. They had fought side by side; had partaken of common peril; inspired each other with mutual respect and affection; and, as we have already shewn, were "sworn brothers in arms," since the hour of their escape on the Black River. Bellegarde was susceptible of the highest order of friendship, which, like a well organized and healthy body, gains force by exercise.

"Leave me not long alone, my gallant friend," said Eustace, as they parted, "unless thy lovely mistress stand in need of thy service." The Indian pressed his hand, and set out on his way to the Lake of the Two Mountains.

A few days after his departure, Eustace took his gun, and, accompanied only by his dog, walked towards a neighbouring wood in quest of game. His dog, who had been running over the ground at a considerable distance, suddenly returned towards his master, apparently alarmed. Eustace continued to march in the direction from whence his dog had come; and as the ground was covered with snow, he perceived the deep track of an animal with which he was unacquainted. He had not gone far when he discovered a huge bear, entering a species of grotto among large rocks. He immediately drew the charge of shot and replaced it with ball cartridge; and having cocked both locks of his gun, he proceeded cautiously towards the lurking place of the animal. It is probable that the keen scent which wild beasts are in general known to

possess, enabled the bear to perceive that an enemy was not far distant. He turned suddenly towards the entrance of the cavern, and growling as if he would menace his follower, stood on his hinder legs as Eustace approached. A sure aim lodged a ball in the head of the animal, and this was followed by a second that instantly brought him down. He made efforts, but they were death struggles, to retreat into his den, followed by Eustace, who was determined to have his skin, as soon as he could return to the post and send some of the soldiers to conduct his grizzly majesty on a sledge. While he was cautiously examining whether his game was killed, he heard the sound of footsteps on the snow, which was covered with a hard crust, the effect of extreme cold. Supposing they might be some of his own people, drawn towards the spot by the

report of a gun, he withdrew from the cavern, and found himself surrounded by six armed men, whom he instantly knew from their high stature and costume not to be Canadians. They were armed with fowling-pieces, which they presented at him, requiring him to surrender himself their prisoner. Unarmed as he was, resistance was without a motive, as it would be fruitless. He had fallen into the hands of a party that had crossed Lake Champlaine on the ice, in order to observe and render an account to their townsmen of the movements of the British troops on the Canada side. He was instantly placed in a sledge between the Americans, and two fleet horses carried them across the smooth surface of the lake at full gallop.

Our readers are sufficiently acquainted with the character of De Courcy, to be able to

judge, of the deep affliction into which this event plunged him. He remained silent and hopeless, whilst his companions rejoiced in the lucky capture they had made. When they were at such a distance from the shore as to remove every apprehension of pursuit, the leader of the party became inquisitive; but his importunities could only draw from Eustace this despairing answer:

“ I am your prisoner, and perfectly indifferent to any fate that may await me; pray abstain from idle questions, which you cannot force me to answer.”

Jonathan Chase, the leader of the party, who was one of the “ select men” of his parish, felt his pride wounded at the taciturnity of his captive; but perceiving he had “ not to do with one of the common folk i’ them there Britons,” contented himself by observing to his

companions, "naw I vaw, this ear gentleman is as dumb as the bear he shot, when we laid hold on im; but," turning to Eustace, "I guess, mister, your tongue will not be tied when ye git among our folks; I guess ye'll talk a spell when we git to aur tawn."

The Americans call every new settlement, where lots of ground are traced on a plan, and a few houses erected, a town, from a conviction, that it will soon become sufficiently populous to merit that appellation. To one of these Eustace was conducted; and his conductors stopped in front of a large house built of framed timber, and covered with shingles of white pine. At a first view, and especially at a distance, buildings of this description have an air of magnificence. To an European they seem to be built of cut stone, painted white. Many of them are good speci-

mens of the Italian style of architecture, and have a portico, columns, a balustrade to conceal the roof, and every other attribute of elegance and taste. The materials cost nothing, and, at least in the appearance of their dwellings, the Americans have reached the highest point in the scale of architectural beauty. A stranger is surprised on viewing these new towns, to see a fine looking mansion, just finished, by the side of a mean and miserable log cabin; but such a picture speaks volumes in favour of the sudden change from privation to comfort, which takes place in this country, where the whole of man's labour is applied to the amelioration of himself and his family, in a state of constant accumulation, unchecked by taxes, poor rates, and those innumerable incumbrances which overcharge industry in old countries. The log cabin had

lodged the hardy adventurer, his wife, his cow, and his pig, some twenty years before, when he had to tear from the bosom of the wilderness the means of subsistence: now we see him a rich cultivator, selling to new settlers the produce of his farm, and converting his surplus revenue into such comforts as a more advanced state of civilization demand.

For the better illustration of our narrative, we shall make a short digression, in order to make our reader acquainted with the progress of these new settlements, which the traveller finds in the United States of North America amidst interminable forests, leading to which, there is no other road than what is called in that country "*a horse-path*." Through this, sometimes leading your horse by the bridle, where the cover is close, and the branches spreading out in all the luxuriance of "un-

clipped nature," and then riding forward where obstacles have been removed, you arrive at a level plain, through which a fine river rolls her waters towards the ocean.

Here, streets and squares are traced, and houses erected as fast as the early inhabitants become rich and able to give employment to tradesmen and mechanics, who migrate from the dense population of a large city to find bread at a cheaper rate, in situations where it is more abundant and less demanded. The habits of these people are in harmony with their prosperity and growing independence. The farmer who inhabits a town of some forty or fifty years standing, into which commerce, industry, and wealth have flowed, is, generally, the father of a large family. Like the patriarchs of old, he is "blessed with sons and daughters." As his children grow up, they

assist him in his labours; and as land is cheap, and servants to cultivate it cannot be found a large family of healthy children is a never-failing source of riches. By law and usage, the child is bound to work for his parents until he attain the age of twenty-one years. The young man is then free to demand a salary, or hire himself to any person who may want his aid. This, in the States of New England, a farmer calls employing *HELP*; the appellation of *servant* being a term of humiliation, and only applied to slaves. The wages of a strong intelligent labourer is from one hundred to one hundred and fifty dollars a-year, exclusive of food and lodging. At the expiration of three or four years, he has acquired a sufficient sum of money to commence operations for his own account, and lay the foundation of future independence;

and, from that moment, he disdains the condition of a hired man. As "man is not made to live alone," the young farmer selects a young girl, brought up like himself in industry and frugality. She has learned to make bread, butter, and cheese; to make soap of the fat of cattle, killed for food in her family, and of pot-ashes extracted from the wood that has been burned in the dwelling house, or the neighbouring forest. She knows how to spin flax and wool, and weave garments for her future husband and children. As she has been well fed, and the early part of her life free from care and penury, she is gay, strong, and fair, and a suitable companion for the hardy husbandman, who braves the privations and difficulties of an existence far removed from all the aid and sympathy of society. The marriage portion of such a

wife is easily furnished out of the family stock; it is composed of a pair of oxen and a cart. The cart is charged with a plough, and other necessary utensils of agriculture. To these are added a sufficient quantity of salt provisions and biscuit, to last until the close of autumn. In a corner of the cart the young woman takes her seat upon some bundles of hay, which serve to feed a cow that brings up the rear of the travelling equipage. Thus equipped, the young couple set out from their native place, in the early months of the year, with the intention of reaching a new unpeopled country, where land is fertile and cheap. It has been the custom of the state legislatures to sell portions of uncultivated land to capitalists, who subdivide them into farms, or lots, of two hundred acres, for the establishment of the growing population, that has

been spreading itself over the country in every direction. The young couple arrive, and select the spot best suited to their wants. A bargain is soon made with the agent of the proprietor; a part of the money earned during the first three years that follow the emancipation of the young man from paternal authority, is paid on account of the purchase, and the axe is laid to the root of a tree, where, in a very few years, a church, a tribunal, and an inn will be erected.

The wood falls beneath the stroke of the invader of the forest: his oxen draw the trees into piles, where they are consumed by fire, and the ashes are either scattered over the ground, or converted into potash for exportation, if navigable water be near. A "log-house" is soon raised, sufficiently commodious to shelter the man, his wife, and their domestic

animals. Poles, pinned together at the top, form a roof, which, covered with large sheets of birch-bark, keeps out the rain and storms; the interstices between the logs, of which the walls are formed, are soon filled with clay and long grass; and a stone chimney in the middle, completes the rustic dwelling. If there be a saw-mill at a convenient distance, a few planks are obtained before the coming winter, to add the luxury of a door and a shutter to a square hole cut in the side of the house to let in light, about the size of the port-hole of a ship of war. A bed is placed in a corner on fresh dry grass and hether; and there he reposes after his day's labour with his young and happy companion, more soundly than those

“ Aching hearts, inclosed in silken curtains;
Too great for pity; for who pities kings?”

The next care of the young farmer is to

provide for the coming winter. He cuts down the lofty trees that surround his dwelling, plants Indian corn in the rich and virgin soil, and has an abundant crop, to feed his family and domestic animals. The next year this stock is increased; he has a calf, young pigs, fowls: his gun brings down deer, with which the forest abounds; he draws fish in abundance from the stream or river in his vicinity; he goes on clearing and planting more land, and then thinks of adding some articles of luxury to those of necessity, which he already possesses. He bores holes in the maple trees, and the saccharine fluid that runs from them, is boiled until the residue is converted into a good kind of brown sugar. When he obtains more than is necessary for his family consumption, he collects it in large masses, and barter it at the nearest town where a mer-

chant can be found, for tea and coffee. Other agricultural adventurers arrive; his surplus produce finds a ready market among them; he hoards up money to complete the purchase of his farm, and when that is done, to buy more land. His children begin to run about, drive the cattle to pasture, and conduct them home at night; the eldest son drives the team in the field, while the father holds the plough. In a few years this family is rich, and its prosperity increases with the number and growth of its members. When the woods are felled, farms blooming in luxuriant beauty, and a sufficient population extended over them to allure merchants and shopkeepers, a town is soon formed, streets are traced, and buildings seem to rise as if by enchantment. Tradesmen and mechanics are in demand, and the farmer no longer finds it profitable to manufacture linen

and woollen cloth, and other articles of wearing-apparel in his own house ; he obtains all these with pork, corn, cheese and butter, raised on his farm. Now the ancient log-cabin disappears to make room for a modern house, with all the comforts and commodities of an advanced state of society, with all its resources and combinations. Next comes the lawyer, the innkeeper and the doctor; the little town widens into an extensive city, wealth and elegance make their appearance, and the parish church is crowded with young people, who vie with one another in the quality of their dress and politeness of their manners, and all the extravagance of petty vanity is mixed up with the primitive simplicity of the first inhabitants. Business, bargains and speculation commence in the morning, and the day ends in a drunken frolic. The tribunal is soon filled with liti-

gants, the taverns with political strife and noisy revels; home grows dull, and new excitements become necessary; vice, folly and dissipation call for gaols and hospitals, and the man who began life with a fortune of five hundred dollars, and found a good appetite for a mess of pottage, now talks of thousands, of banks and public stocks, and finds that the possession of all these, does not exempt him from gout and gravel, and all the infirmities which ease and opulence engender. Ambition takes possession of the most fortunate, and sets him at variance with his more modest neighbour, once his equal and his friend, now his inferior in wealth and influence: they dispute about municipal honours, seek to become members of the state legislature; one becomes an aristocrat, and calls for repressive statutes and severe penalties; the other remains a de-

mocrat, and stirs up the jealousy of that class out of which he has not been able to raise himself; they stigmatize each other with factious names and corrupt motives, and thus enjoy all "*the blessings of civilization and the march of intellect.*" This picture, in all its stages, may be seen in the United States.

END OF VOL. II.

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